

Yeltsin-Clinton summit delayed by day

MOSCOW (R) — Boris Yeltsin and Bill Clinton have agreed to put off their planned March 19 summit in Helsinki for a day to allow Mr. Clinton more time to recover from the knee surgery he underwent on Friday, the Kremlin said. "According to a mutual agreement reached by Russian President Boris Yeltsin and U.S. President Bill Clinton the meeting planned for March 19, 1997 in Helsinki is postponed for one day," a Kremlin statement said. Mr. Clinton will leave Washington late on March 19 and arrive in Helsinki midday Thursday. On Saturday, the White House had said there had been no discussion of delaying or significantly altering Mr. Clinton's plans for the two-day summit with Mr. Yeltsin, whose own health has been more of a concern than that of Mr. Clinton's. Mr. Clinton tore his tendon in a freak accident on Friday when he lost his footing on a step at the Florida home of Australian golf professional Greg Norman. He was operated on Friday at Bethesda National Navy Medical Centre.

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King condoles families of victims of Baqoura attack, pledges to continue work for secure Mideast for all

His Majesty visits 7 Israeli homes to personally convey sorrow and grief

By Francesca Ciriaci
with agency dispatches

WEST JERUSALEM — His Majesty King Hussein on Sunday paid moving visits to the families of the Israeli victims of Thursday's attack in Baqoura and conveyed his personal condolences and renewed his commitment to working for a secure Middle East for all children.

The King told the families of the seven schoolgirls killed in the attack by a mentally deranged Jordanian soldier that he felt like as if his own daughters had died.

"I will do all I can to make the (Mideast) region safe for all children," he told them, and reassured the families that "justice will be done" in a reference to the ongoing investigations into the reasons behind and circumstances of Thursday's shooting rampage.

The seven dead children were identified as Shiri Baddayev, Nirit Cohen, Karen Cohen, Ya'ela Me'iri, Sivan Fathi, Natalie Elkali and Adi Malka — all of them 12 or 13.

The King, accompanied by His Royal Highness Prince Faisal and Her Royal Highness Princess Aisha as well as Royal Court Chief Awn Khasneh, flew to Tel Aviv's Ben Gurion airport early

Sunday on the condolence visit.

They were received upon arrival by Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, Foreign Minister David Levy, Jordanian ambassador to Tel Aviv Omar Rifai and senior Israeli officials who also accompanied him on the visits to the families.

The King and the delegation accompanying him were first driven in a motorcade in pouring rain to Tselafon, where the family of one of the dead girl lives.

After that visit, the King went to Beit Shemesh, where the families of all others live.

Under an "operation warm feelings" mounted by Israeli more than 3,000 members of Israeli security forces were deployed throughout the area. Traffic was completely blocked to facilitate the King's visit.

Israel TV gave full coverage to the visit, broadcasting live the King's conversations with the relatives of the victims.

In some cases, Mr. Netanyahu translated the parent's comments in Hebrew and the King's comments in English to the family.

As the King entered the homes, the families offered him salt and bread in a traditional Jewish gesture of

welcome. The King tasted the offering and knelt with the family members in mourning.

King Hussein's first stop Sunday was Moshav Tselafon, a communal settlement where one of the victims, Sivan Fathi, lived. The other victims were from the town of Beit Shemesh, halfway between Jerusalem and Tel Aviv.

"I hope that God will give you the strength to carry on," the King told the family, his red-and-white headress a bright spot in a sea of dark skullcaps.

Sivan's grandfather Nisim, who immigrated to Israel from Yemen in 1949, blessed the King in Arabic.

"Welcome, welcome, King of peace," he said. "God bless you and your family."

Sivan's father, Yisrael Fathi, said the King told him that "he was very sorry, that our daughter is like his daughter, and that it pains him very much."

Thursday's attack "is a crime that is a shame for all of us," King Hussein told the grieving parents of Natalie Elkali. "It affects us all as members of one family."

The parents of Adi Malka, both of them deaf, communicated with the King in sign language with an interpreter.

"I want my daughter

back," her sobbing mother, Alia, signed. "We have peace, but I don't have my daughter anymore."

"I feel that I've lost a child," King Hussein replied.

At one point Alia passed out for about a minute.

"If there is anything left in life it will be spent to ensure that all the children enjoy the kind of peace and security that we never had in our times," the King said.

"No words can ever express how I personally feel, how my family feels, how my people feel," King Hussein told the family.

"We consider this a loss that all of us suffered. I feel that I've lost a child, and... I hope you will consider me a brother and a member of the family."

"The memory of your daughter will live with me forever. I hope her memory will give you strength," the King told the parents.

"Your loss is my loss, my personal loss," he said. Sivan's parents showed the King pictures of their daughter.

"The peace with Jordan should be the best hope," said Yisrael Fathi, the father. "I am sure Your Majesty will fight those fanatic extremists."

Mr. Netanyahu flipped

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His Majesty King Hussein and Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu pause on Sunday during their condolence call on the Malka family as a family member gives a drink of water to Aliya Malka, mother of Adi Malka, one of seven Israeli schoolgirls killed in Thursday's attack at Baqoura, who fainted for a moment during the visit (Reuters photo)

King voices his determination to press ahead with quest for peace

Netanyahu maintains hard-line despite appeals, but asserts he is committed to making peace

Combined agency
dispatches

WEST JERUSALEM — His Majesty King Hussein on Sunday reiterated his total denunciation of Thursday's attack at Baqoura against Israeli schoolgirls and his commitment to seeking a just and comprehensive peace in the Middle East.

Addressing a joint press conference with Benjamin Netanyahu after talks with the Israeli prime minister following visits to seven Israeli families who lost their daughters in the attack by a mentally deranged Jordanian soldier, the King also forcefully reaffirmed Jordan's rejection of violence.

Mr. Netanyahu told the

press conference that he was also committed to continuing the peace process, but he said he was determined to go ahead with plans to construct a Jewish settlement in Arab East Jerusalem despite appeals against it.

Mr. Netanyahu said a three-way conference call among the King, Palestinian President Yasser Arafat and himself in an effort to resolve the crisis in peace talks between Israel and the Palestinians had failed.

But Mr. Netanyahu told the press conference contacts were continuing between Israel and the Palestinians.

"We have much to gain, all three of us, in moving the process forward and we cannot let our disagree-

ments, which are as yet unresolved, destroy the process," he said.

Mr. Netanyahu reaffirmed that his government would go ahead with construction of the so-called Har Homa settlement on Jabal Abu Ghneim despite appeals from the Palestinian and Jordanian leaders.

"The work will begin this week," Mr. Netanyahu said.

Mr. Netanyahu said he and Mr. Arafat during their two-hour meeting Sunday evening in a bid to resolve the crisis sparked by the Jerusalem building plan and other recent Israeli decisions rejected by the Palestinians and strongly

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King visits Weizman in hospital

By Francesca Ciriaci
Special to the Jordan Times

WEST JERUSALEM — His Majesty King Hussein on Sunday visited Israeli President Ezer Weizman in a hospital in West Jerusalem in what was definitely a lighter moment in the otherwise solemn visits the Monarch made to the families of those killed in Thursday's attack at Baqoura.

Accompanied by Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu and Foreign Minister David Levy, the King also visited in the same facility, Hadassah University Hospital, a teacher and student wounded in the Baqoura attack.

Mr. Weizman broke an arm on Friday as he stepped down from a helicopter following visits to the family of one of the Israeli girls killed in the attack. He underwent surgery immediately thereafter and is expected to remain in bed for some time.

"To meet you, a pilot, this way, while I am grounded, is the last thing I expected," said President Weizman from his bed as the King entered the room specially decorated with Jordanian and Israeli flags to mark the occasion of the encounter between the two heads of state.

The Israeli president, a former pilot with the Royal Air Force of Britain, and the King, who pilots his own plane, shook hands. The Israeli leader's right arm is healthy.

"I would like to say how much of a moving experience it has been today," King Hussein told Mr. Weizman of his visits earlier to the bereaved families from the Baqoura attack.

President Weizman, who visited Jordan late last year in his first state visit to the Kingdom, paid tribute to King Hussein for having undertaken the trip to console the families of victims of the Baqoura attack.

He described the visit as "a brave and courageous act in the situation that was created by a terrible crime."

The King also told Mr. Weizman that "this is a challenge we face to work for peace and a better future for the generations to come."

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Prodi in Syria for two-day visit

DAMASCUS (AFP) — Italian Prime Minister Romano Prodi arrived in Syria on Sunday for a two-day visit to strengthen ties between the two countries. Mr. Prodi, who is due to meet with Syrian President Hafez Al Assad, will affirm Italy's support for the Arab-Israeli peace process, an Italian diplomat said. "Italy" supports the U.N. resolutions (relating to the Middle East) and the principle of the exchange of land-for-peace," the diplomat added.

8 Iraqis drowned as ship sinks

KAS, Turkey (AP) — Eight Iraqis, trying to sneak into Greece, drowned Sunday when their boat sank off this Mediterranean resort town, the Anatolia news agency said. The bodies of the Iraqis were recovered by the Turkish coast guard and brought to Kas, which is only 2.5 kilometres away from the Greek islet of Strongili. Thousands of illegal immigrants, most of them Kurds, Iraqis and Iranians, pay to be smuggled to the many Greek islands near the Turkish coast.

It's the Final Count Down
for the
Grand Opening
of
Y?STERDA?S
Theme Restaurant & Bar

Israel threatens to send Arafat back into exile if violence erupts

TEL AVIV (AFP) — Israeli Justice Minister Tsahi Hanegbi stirred up a political storm Sunday by threatening to force Palestinian President Yasser Arafat back into exile if Palestinians launch violent protests against Israel's plans for a new Jewish settlement in Arab East Jerusalem.

"If the Palestinians choose violence, Yasser Arafat will not be able to continue living in his seaside villa with Suha (Mr. Arafat's wife) while at the same time directing operations" against Israel, Mr. Hanegbi told a meeting of hardliners in Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's Likud Party Saturday night.

In remarks broadcast by Israeli army radio Sunday, Mr. Hanegbi said Mr. Arafat could not escape Israeli punishment any more than could "the engineer" — radical bombmaker Yahya Ayash who was assassinated in Gaza by presumed Israeli agents in January 1995.

Israel is set to begin work this week on the new settlement at Jabal Abu Ghneim in Arab East Jerusalem.

The plan has drawn worldwide condemnation and warnings of violence by Palestinians who see the project as designed to crush their hopes of making Arab East Jerusalem the capital of a future state.

"If there is war, it will be a war to the end," warned Mr. Hanegbi, considered a protégé of Mr. Netanyahu.

In a clear reference to Mr. Arafat, he added: "He who carries a suitcase full of weapons runs a serious risk of quickly having to pack his bags and returning to the road to exile in Baghdad or Tunis."

Mr. Hanegbi's remarks sparked immediate condemnation from Palestinian officials and rebukes from other Israeli ministers.

"This is unacceptable impudence," charged Mr. Hanegbi's Palestinian counterpart, Freij Abu Midein. "This Israeli leadership is not honest or sincere and this minister has sucked on the milk of hatred."

Mr. Abu Midein said he cancelled a scheduled meeting Sunday with Mr. Hanegbi as part of an overall suspension of high-level contacts decided by the Palestinian leadership last week after Israel refused to back down on Jabal Abu Ghneim and other hardline decisions.

Foreign Minister David Levy also rebuked Mr. Hanegbi. "I advise our friends to avoid these kind of remarks because we want to pursue the peace process."

Mr. Arafat held a meeting with international diplomats on Saturday to appeal

for help "to save the peace process" in the face of Israel's recent decisions.

Asked after the meeting about the potential for violence over Jabal Abu Ghneim, he said: "I don't know, you have to ask the Palestinian masses."

Israeli army Deputy Chief of Staff General Matan Vilnai warned of violent protests when bulldozers start breaking ground Monday or Tuesday.

"We are prepared for the worst case scenario, which is very violent protests by Palestinians with the start of construction," he told Ha'aretz newspaper.

"We expect events similar to those which took place in September 1996, when we were forced to deploy troops" to put down unrest in the West Bank and Gaza Strip, he said.

More than 80 people were killed in September in clashes following the opening of a new exit to an archaeological tunnel near Muslim holy sites in Arab East Jerusalem.

"If necessary, the Palestinian territories will be sealed off," Gen. Vilnai said. "The leaders of the Palestinian (National) Authority have been warned of the dangers."

Gen. Vilnai said the army is on a heightened state of

(Continued on page 7)

King's Israel visit not political, analysts say

By Dominic Evans
Reuters

AMMAN — King Hussein's condolence visit to Israel must not be seen as a political retreat from his bitter criticism last week of Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, Jordanian analysts said Sunday.

They said the King's trip should be viewed as a humanitarian gesture after a Jordanian soldier gunned down seven Israeli teenagers, not a thawing of political ties.

"I think one should distinguish between the humanitarian attitude, which is desirable, and the political facts," said one political analyst, who declined to be named.

The King's visit came a day before Israeli bulldozers were due to start building Jewish settlements around Arab East Jerusalem and exactly a week after he accused Mr. Netanyahu of pushing the Middle East "towards an abyss of bloodshed."

State television showed the King kneeling next to relatives of one of the Israeli victims, holding their hands as Mr. Netanyahu looked on at his side.

"He is taking a risk by going because we don't know what the reaction will be in Jordan or in Israel — whether it might be considered a sign of weakness," said Hani Hourani, head of the Amman-based New Jordan Centre.

"But he is not changing his mind about his criticism of Mr. Netanyahu," he said.

Officials in Jordan were swift to condemn the killing of the seven Israelis three days ago and most Jordanians said they rejected any attack on young children.

But criticism of the shooting has been tinged by a perception that the world is always quicker to sympathise with Israeli rather than Arab victims.

"What about the 100 people killed in Qana?" was the curt reply from a member of Jordan's Islamic Action Front when asked for reaction to Thursday's shooting. Around 100 Lebanese civilians were killed by Israeli shelling at a United Nations camp in the southern Lebanese village of Qana in 1996.

Ibrahim Izzedine, a former government minister, said Israel's insistence on going ahead with building a Jerusalem settlement was

Top-of-the-line arms on show in Abu Dhabi

ABU DHABI (AFP) — The five-day Abu Dhabi arms fair, billed as the biggest in the world, opened here Sunday to demonstrations by tanks, rough-terrain vehicles and helicopters under a desert drizzle.

The Abu Dhabi crown prince and deputy armed forces commander of the United Arab Emirates (UAE), Sheikh Khalifa Bin Zayed Al Nahayan, inaugurated the show which has attracted 747 exhibitors from more than 50 countries.

The world's top producers, apart from Israel which has no ties with the UAE, are pitted in a battle for lucrative contracts from a Gulf region buoyed by strong oil prices.

The main prize expected to be announced at the IDEX '97 exhibition is an estimated \$1 billion contract from the UAE for six fast patrol boats.

Rival bids are being boosted by visits to UAE waters by British carrier HMS Illustrious, U.S. destroyer Paul Hamilton and frigates La Fayette of France, Germany's Mecklenburg Vorpostenn and Van Galen of the Netherlands.

All five countries are in the running for the contract at the land and naval arms exhibition, held every two years.

In what organisers have billed as "the world's biggest defence show," covered by in-house television and on the Internet, more than 40,000 visitors are expected to pass through the gates.

They undergo metal-detector tests on the way out to ensure the arms are not carried away, while sniffer dogs patrol the in- and outdoor exhibition areas to detect any live ammunition.

With the Middle East raking in 40 per cent of global arms exports, according to



Crown Prince of Abu Dhabi Sheikh Khalifa Bin Zayed Al Nahayan, commander-in-chief of the United Arab Emirates' armed forces, flanked by a South African official looks at a South African sub-machinegun during a visit to the South African arms stand at the IDEX '97 exhibition in Abu Dhabi on Sunday (AFP photo)

the International Institute for Strategic Studies, Russia is fighting to make new inroads in a Gulf market that is traditionally Western.

In its biggest contingent since IDEX was launched in 1993, Russia with 80 defence contractors at the show has brought its Kilo-class submarine, the Black Shark helicopter and T-90 main battle tank.

Its sale of three Kilo-class submarines to Iran has raised concern on the Arab side of the Gulf.

Russia's S-300 air defence system is also competing with the Gulf war-proven U.S. Patriot anti-missile system for a \$1 billion deal with the UAE, arms industry sources said.

While Saudi Arabia and Qatar are in the market for main battle tanks, from the United States, France or Britain, the UAE is keeping a lid on who wins an esti-

ated \$6 billion contract to sell 80 warplanes.

The competition pits Rafale and Mirage 2000 of the French firm Dassault against the F-16 of U.S. manufacturer Lockheed Martin.

At a mobility demonstration site, covering 100,000 square metres, producers of armour, rough-terrain vehicles and rescue helicopters showed off their latest wares on Sunday.

Several ministers, such as France's Defence Minister Charles Millon and British State Minister for Defence Procurement James Arbuthnot, are also being deployed for the show, as governments coordinate efforts with national arms manufacturers to offset shrinking domestic markets.

The Gulf countries, stunned by Iraq's 1990 invasion of Kuwait, are expected to spend a massive \$60-\$80 billion on arms by 2001, said General Sultan Al Suwaidi, head of the IDEX '97 organising committee.

As guardians of 45 per cent of the world's oil reserves, the recovery in oil prices since last year is expected to embolden a new spending spree.

Weapons dealers, armed with walls of videos and promotional slogans such as "protect your nation with proof, not promises," primed their sales pitch to potential customers.

Accessories of war were also on display, such as watches, boots, helmets, night-vision equipment and field showers and latrines.

IDEX '97 will feature demonstrations of fighting vehicles as well as live-fire exercises at the Maqatra range, some 20 kilometres away. Missiles with a range of 25 kilometres are to be tested.

Iran, S. Arabia discuss Jerusalem

DUBAI (Agencies) — Iranian Foreign Minister Ali Akbar Velayati says that Israel's decision to build a new Jewish settlement in Arab East Jerusalem is "a great catastrophe."

He made the remark to reporters late Saturday after a meeting in the Saudi capital Riyadh with Saudi Foreign Minister Saud Al Faisal, Iran's official Islamic Republic News Agency (IRNA) reported Sunday.

Mr. Velayati is on a 10-nation tour to invite heads of state to a summit of the Organisation of the Islamic Conference (OIC), scheduled to begin in the Iranian capital Tehran on Dec. 7. He was to travel to Oman later Sunday.

Saudi Arabia, still wary of revolutionary Iran, is not expected to send a high-ranking delegation to the OIC meeting.

It was Mr. Velayati's first visit to Saudi Arabia since 1993.

IRNA, which was monitored in Dubai, said the talks between Mr. Velayati and Prince Saud centred on Jerusalem.

Mr. Velayati told reporters that the proposed Jewish settlement is "a great catastrophe for the Islamic World, and Islamic countries must fully cooperate with one another in this regard," IRNA said.

The agency quoted Prince Saud as saying that Jerusalem was the "heart of Muslims the world over" and that the proposed settlement "had injured the hearts of Muslims."

Iran and Saudi Arabia do not see eye to eye on most subjects. But both have criticised Israel's decision to build a new Jewish settlement in Arab East Jerusalem and consider it an attempt to obliterate the city's Islamic identity.

Iran and Saudi Arabia both have members on the OIC's Jerusalem Committee, which is expected to meet later this month to discuss the Israeli settlement plans.

Iran says UAE row should be settled in talks

Mr. Velayati said Sunday Iran's a territorial dispute with the United Arab Emirates (UAE) over three strategic Gulf islands should be settled through negotiation.

"We have always voiced our readiness to enter direct negotiations with the United Arab Emirates...We have not closed the doors and we see that if there is a problem it should be solved within the framework of negotiations," Mr. Velayati told a news conference in Riyadh.

Since 1992 Iran and the UAE have been at loggerheads over Abu Musa and the Greater and Lesser Tunb islands that are close to key oil shipping lanes at the mouth of the Gulf.

Iran and UAE member Sharjah run Abu Musa jointly under an agreement reached in 1971 before the departure of British forces. In 1992, Iran tightened control over Abu Musa, citing security reasons. The UAE reacted by reviving its claim to the islands and accusing Iran of occupying them.

Mr. Velayati said the 1971 agreement should be the basis of talks and any unilateral decision to take the case to court would not solve the dispute.

"There is also a known agreement that was signed between us, the UAE and the British Foreign Office which at the time was party to this issue. This agreement should be the basis and the principle to any kind of negotiations between us...For a case to be from one side will not solve the problem."

The UAE has urged Tehran to agree to take the dispute to the International Court of Justice in the Hague.

Iran says its "sovereignty" over the islands is not negotiable but has called for talks with the UAE to clear up misunderstandings. Iran opened an airport on Abu Musa last March.

Iraq-Kuwait tension likely over maritime lines — Jane's

ABU DHABI (AFP) — Iraq's return to trading in Gulf waters once U.N. sanctions are lifted is likely to heighten tension with Kuwait because of maritime access, the British specialist review Jane's warned Sunday.

"Further problems are likely to arise because of Kuwaiti control over maritime access to the Iraqi port of Umm Qasr," Jane's Sentinel reported on the opening day of the Abu Dhabi arms fair.

It noted that part of Umm Qasr was handed over to Kuwait, under a U.N. border settlement following the 1991 Gulf war, which ended seven months of Iraqi occupation of the emirate.

"Once Iraq begins to trade again after sanctions are removed, this will remain an acute point of tension," forecast Jane's Sentinel.

In the wake of Iraqi and Kuwaiti charges of violating each other's waters, Umm Qasr is expected to resume activity at the end of March or early April under a U.N. "oil-for-food" deal.

In an easing of the sanctions imposed after Iraq's August 1990 invasion of Kuwait, the accord allows Baghdad to export \$2 billion of oil in six months to finance imports of food and medicine.

Oil exports, including from Umm Qasr, started in December but the delivery of humanitarian supplies has been delayed.

Egypt's top cleric rules cloning is the work of the devil

CAIRO (R) — Egypt's highest-ranking Islamic official said on Sunday that cloning humans was the work of the devil but was acceptable only if used to provide healthy organs for people in need of transplants.

Speaking at a symposium on cloning held at the doctor's syndicate, Grand Mufti Nasr Farid Wasseil said scientists should concentrate on ways to combat more pressing issues such as poverty rather than on cloning, research and called on legislators to severely punish those who practiced it.

"There are in the religious scriptures indications that this (cloning) is the work of the devil, that he is behind all corruption and cloning aims at changing Allah's creation and the order of society," Sheikh Wasseil told the symposium.

"This issue is taboo but not if it deals with aspects that can help humanity, as in cloning an organ such as a liver or a kidney to solve a problem... and not weaken a healthy person."

The controversial subject of human cloning hit the headlines recently after scientists in Scotland introduced the world to Dolly, a lamb cloned from an adult sheep. But scientists have not said whether it is possible to clone just

organs.

Egyptian scientists told government newspapers over the weekend that they did not perform any cloning research because it was expensive and needed sophisticated technology.

Making hybrids and artificial insemination was as far as they got, the scientists added.

But the issue has managed to divide Egypt's cabinet, with Religious Endowments Minister Mahmoud Hamdi Zaqqouq, quoted as saying that cloning was so taboo that it was not even up for discussion. But Health Minister Ismail Sallam said it was a purely scientific affair.

Sheikh Wasseil, whose office is responsible for issuing religious edicts, said: "Why are scientists dealing with cloning when there is desertification, poverty and other issues that need our efforts more? We don't need this."

"Officials should ban research in this field and impose strict punishment on those who perform it as it will lead to corruption to the extent of which only Allah can know."

An Islamic theologian at the prestigious Al Azhar institute has also called for an end to research on cloning, saying it did not meet Islamic requirements.

22 officers among victims of Iran crash

TEHRAN (AFP) — Twenty-two air force officers were among the 88 people who died in last week's crash of an Iranian military C-130 transport plane in the northeast of the country, a newspaper reported Sunday.

The 22 officers were from a base in the southwestern region of Dezful, the daily Iran said. Several officers from the 2nd Armoured Battalion in Dezful and several members of the elite Revolutionary Guards were also among the 88 victims of Thursday's crash, the newspaper said.

The authorities had earlier put the number of victims at 86, but the army said Sunday that 88 people were on board the U.S.-made transport plane when it went down.

Built before the 1979 revolution, the Dezful base in Khuzestan province is one of the most important in Iran and is situated near the border with Iraq.

The propeller-driven plane crashed Thursday during the final minutes of a flight from Dezful to the northeastern city of Mashhad.

The victims were all military personnel and their families. Officials said there were no survivors.

The exact cause of the accident is still not known, but state television said the pilot had contacted the control tower and told them that they had suffered engine failure.

It was the worst air disaster in Iran in four years.

The accident occurred the day after a meeting at Dezful of air force officers and Iran's paramount leader and spiritual guide Ayatollah Ali Khamenei.

Saudi Arabia denies man held in Canada is wanted

DUBAI (R) — Saudi Arabia denied it was seeking a Saudi man detained in Canada who claimed to be wanted in connection with a bombing in the kingdom that killed 19 U.S. soldiers.

The denial was made by Saudi Deputy Interior Minister Prince Ahmad Bin Abdul Aziz to the Saudi-owned London-based Al Asharq Al Awsat newspaper on Sunday.

The man, Fahad Al Shehri, sought refugee status in Canada and said he was part of a mujahideen (holy warriors) group, though he denied involvement in the June bombing in the eastern Saudi town of Khobar. Canadian officials have said.

Prince Ahmad told Al Asharq Al Awsat that Mr. Shehri was "not wanted in any case or crime and what

he claims is a lie."

"We know the man, all his family is in Saudi Arabia and he is not wanted neither in the Khobar bombing or any other case. We have not been informed of any charges against him," he added.

"We will not ask for him to return...He is a Saudi citizen, his country is open for him whenever he wants to return to his country and family. But if he does not want to return, then this is his own business," he added.

Mr. Shehri applied to be a refugee on arrival at Ottawa airport on Dec. 6 and was detained by Canadian immigration officials three days later. An inquiry into whether to grant him refugee status opened on March 3 but was adjourned until March 26.

Kuwait to retry three in oil company fraud case

KUWAIT (R) — A Kuwait court has annulled jail sentences and fines on three former oil executives accused of fraud and ordered a retrial because the original court did not date the rulings, legal sources said on Sunday.

"The court of appeals annulled the ruling because the criminal court did not put the date on it," said a source. "The case goes to the ministers court which is handling a case related to their case."

In June a criminal court ruled Kuwaitis Abdul Fatah Al Badr and Hussan Qabazard and Jordanian Nassim Mohsen were guilty of fraud, embezzlement and making illegal profits at Kuwait Oil Tanker company (KOTC) in the 1980s. Mr. Badr and Mr. Mohsen were tried in

absentia. Mr. Qabazard, former KOTC deputy chairman, was sentenced to 40 years in jail and told to pay \$65.73 million. He is believed to have left Kuwait.

Mr. Badr, former KOTC chairman, was sentenced to 35 years and told to pay \$49.17 million. Mohsen was sentenced to 15 years and told to pay \$15.88 million. A fourth man, Timothy Stafford, a Briton, was acquitted.

A fifth defendant, Sheikh Ali Al Khalifa Al Sabah — a former oil minister and the most prominent member of the ruling Sabah family to face trial — is on trial by a ministers' court.

Sheikh Ali, who is facing charges of making illegal profits, has denied the charges.

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PROGRAMME TWO

14:05 Flintstones
14:30 Cartoon — Captain Planet
15:00 French Programmes
16:00 Nature's Inventions
16:30 Deep Water Haven
16:50 A Programme for Children
17:00 Doc. — Extra Dimensions
18:00 French Programmes
19:30 News Headlines
19:35 Comedy — Roseanne
20:00 Doc. — Discover Magazine
20:30 Drama — Murder She Wrote
21:10 Drama — Highlander
22:00 News in English
22:25 Under Suspicion
23:00 Police Drama — Hunter

PRAYER TIMES

04:23 Fajr
05:40 (Sunrise) Duha
11:44 Dhuhur
15:09 'Asr
17:48 Maghreb
19:05 'Isha

CHURCHES

St. Mary of Nazareth Church Swiffield, Tel. 810740
Assemblies of God Church Tel. 632785
St. Joseph Church Tel. 624590
Church of the Annunciation Tel. 637440
De la Salle Church Tel. 661757
Irra Sancta Church Tel.

JORDAN TIMES DAILY GUIDE AND CALENDAR

Deserts.....03/13	630341	alestine.....607071	Shmeisani
Jordan Valley.....09/18		Shmeisani Hospital.....669131	
Yesterday's high temperatures:		University Hospital.....845845	
Amman 08, Aqaba 21 Humidity		Al-Muasher Hospital.....667227/9	
readings: Amman 96 per cent,		The Islamic, Abdali.....666126/37	
Aqaba 40 per cent.		Al-Ahli, Abdali.....664164/6	
		Italian, Al-Muhajreen.....771101/3	
		Al-Bashir.....771111/26	
		Army, Marka.....891611/15	
		Queen Alia Hospital.....602240/50	
		Amal Hospital.....674155	
		The Arab Centre for Heart and	
		Special Surgery.....865199	
		ZARQA:	
		Zarqa Govt. Hospital	
		(09)983323	
		Zarqa National Hospital	
		(09)900560	
		Ibn Sina Hospital.....(09)986732	
		Al Hikma Modern Hospital	
		(09)990990	
		IRBID:	
		Princess Basma Hospital	
		(02)275555	
		Greek Catholic Hospital	
		(02)272775	
		Ibn Al Nafes Hospital	
		(02)247100	
		AQABA:	
		Princess Haya Hospital	
		(03)314111	
		FOR THE TRAVELLER	
		QUEEN ALIA	
		INTERNATIONAL	

09:50 Marka Airport (from QAIA) (RW)

20:30 Aqaba (RW)

HAJAZ RAILWAY TRAIN

Dep. Amman.....8:00 a.m. every Monday
Arr. Damascus.....5:00 p.m. every Monday
Dep. Damascus.....7:30 a.m. every Sunday
Arr. Amman.....5:00 p.m. every Sunday

MARKET PRICES

Upper/lower price in fils per kg.

Apple.....700/800	
Banana.....600/600	
Banana (imported).....1000/900	
Cabbage.....130/80	
Carrot.....230/180	
Cauliflower.....240/160	
Cucumber (large).....240/120	
Cucumber (small).....340/220	
Eggplant.....280/150	
Fava beans.....500/300	
Garlic.....1450/900	
Grape fruit.....180/100	
Lemon.....370/250	
Marrow (large).....220/120	
Marrow (small).....420/260	
Onion (green).....240/160	
Onion (dry).....250/120	
Orange.....440/300	
Peas.....850/600	
Pepper (hot).....440/220	
Pepper (sweet).....500/250	
Potato.....350/250	
Radish.....120/50	
Spinach.....250/200	
String beans.....900/600	
Tomato.....360/220	

Crown Prince reviews Badia Development Programme...

AMMAN (Petra) — HRH Crown Prince Hassan Sunday chaired a meeting of the steering committee of the Badia Development Project to review the achievements of the first stage of a badia development programme.

Prince Hassan underlined the need to develop the Safawi Research Centre, which is in charge of such development including the training of residents of these areas in implementing local projects.

The Crown Prince reminded the meeting that the programmes are intended to deal with unemployment and poverty problems in the region.

The committee reviewed a plan for the next development stage, prepared by 180 researchers from 18 Jordanian organisations. The researchers covered such issues as housing, livestock wealth, natural resources, the environment, and water resources.

... meets with Jewish American group...

AMMAN (Petra) — HRH Crown Prince Hassan Sunday reiterated Jordan's commitment to building peace among the peoples of the Middle East in a manner which guarantees the rights and aspirations of all.

Speaking at a meeting, held at the Royal Court, with a delegation representing the American Jewish Committee, Prince Hassan said that everyone concerned should pursue efforts towards a comprehensive and just peace which would guarantee the legal, political, and human rights of all parties.

There must be a just solution to the Palestinian refugee problem based on international law, he said.

The Crown Prince condemned the shooting of Israeli schoolgirls at Baqoura by a Jordanian

soldier last Thursday and said that everyone concerned should work jointly to achieve peace and benefit from its dividends.

He underlined the need for the region to attract foreign investments to contribute to the construction of the regional economy and improve the living standards of its people.

Members of the delegation expressed their absolute support for the peace process and stated their appreciation of Jordan's role in peace-building.

They said that the American Jewish Committee, which has strong contacts in Washington and other Western capitals, will seek to encourage foreign investments in Jordan as well as economic aid to the Kingdom.

... and Saudi minister

AMMAN (Petra) — HRH Crown Prince Hassan received Saudi Minister of Industry Hashem Yamani at the Royal Court and the two reviewed ways to promote Jordanian-Saudi relations with an emphasis on economic and trade links. They also reviewed joint ventures and developments in the Arab World.

The Prince and the Saudi minister expressed satisfaction with the current level of Saudi Arabian-Jordanian trade and meetings among businesspersons from the two countries. They underlined the importance of such meetings in achieving economic integration.

The meeting was attended by Minister of Trade and Industry Ali Abul Ragheb.

International development groups open conference today

AMMAN (Petra) — Four major international development organisations today will open a three-day conference centred on financing small economic projects in the Kingdom.

The conference, held under the patronage of HRH Crown Prince Hassan, is organised by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID), the World Bank and the European Union.

Representatives of these organisations and others will discuss several issues related to implementing such projects and ways to secure financing.

A statement by the organisers Sunday said that small projects have improved general income, created new jobs and curtailed unemployment in many countries.

A large number of international experts from the World Bank, USAID and heads of economic development agencies in Gaza, Egypt, and Jordan are expected to take part in the meeting.

The conference will be hosted at the Royal Cultural Centre (RCC).

Lower House dissolves Housing Bank Law

By Tareq Momani
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — The Lower House of Parliament Sunday held its last session before adjourning in implementation of a Royal Decree issued Saturday.

The decree terminated the present session of Parliament as of March 19, however not before lawmakers endorse draft laws and approve a House committee's recommendations.

During the meeting, attended by Prime Minister Abdul Karim Kabariti, cabinet members endorsed a draft law dissolving the Housing Bank Law upon a recommendation of the House Finance and Economic Committee.

The House recommended that the government amend regulations in such a manner that banks and financial companies would receive incentives such as tax exemptions for granting loans for housing purposes.

In its recommendation, the committee maintained that the 1974 Housing Bank Law was initially envisaged as a tool for stimulating the construction of housing units in Jordan through loans over extended periods and so the Housing Bank was granted several privileges to achieve this end.

Accordingly, the Housing Bank began to apportion such loans but also conducted business as did other local commercial banks.

Therefore, the committee recommended that this bank no longer enjoy privileges denied to other banks.

It said that the Housing Bank is a commercial entity as are other banks and is not restricted to financing housing projects alone and that other financial institutions are also apportioning housing loans, while not enjoying the same privileges.

Islamist Deputy Hamam Saeed suggested that the Housing Bank pay back funds to the state treasury which it has accumulated through privileges granted over the years.

The proposal was seconded by a second Islamist deputy, Ahmad Kofahi, who demanded that the government retrieve these funds before converting the Housing Bank into an ordinary commercial bank.

Minister of Higher Education Abdullah Ensour defended the Housing Bank, describing it as a national institution which has contributed to the country's reconstruction.

The Housing Bank now ranks second, only after the Arab Bank, in terms of operations and capital, he said.

This reflects the success of its operations and objectives and once it is converted into an ordinary com-

mercial bank it will pay dues to the state treasury, the minister maintained.

He added that the Housing Bank has always paid its dues to the state treasury on commercial operations.

Other speakers approved of the call to grant certain privileges to commercial banks in Jordan if they grant housing loans on an equal basis as the Housing Bank has historically done.

Under the now defunct Housing Bank Law, the Housing Bank was released from paying income tax on its profits and exempted from depositing part of its capital at the Central Bank of Jordan as a reserve fund.

Nor did it pay interest on funds transferred and deposited, intended for the state treasury, by the World Bank and other organisations.

Meanwhile, the deputies also endorsed an amendment to the 1997 Labour Law by creating an "association of employers"; they also endorsed an amendment to a 1997 law on the Aqaba Region Authority as submitted by the government.

The amendment to the Aqaba Region Authority law grants that city's board the right to generate comprehensive plans for developing areas within the Aqaba region.

The House approved recommendations by the

Palestine and Occupied Arab Territories Committee on the issue of refugees and displaced persons.

The committee requested that the government cooperate with Arab countries hosting refugees in calling for a U.N. Security Council meeting to re-examine the mandate granted to the U.N. Relief and Works Agency (UNRWA) in order to expand the agency's authorities to secure international protection for the Palestinian refugees and support their right of repatriation.

The committee also recommended that the Security Council enfranchise the UNRWA to improve and expand the level of services offered to the refugees and that the UNRWA's annual budget be part of the budget allocated to the U.N. and not simply provided by the donor nations.

The House also approved a draft law on cooperatives. The law allocates various tasks related to cooperatives to the Jordan Cooperative Organisation (JCO).

However, it also enfranchises members of these cooperatives to manage their own societies' affairs independent of any exterior interference.

The aim of this law is to allocate more freedom to cooperatives as the JCO centralised power over their operations in the past.



Chief Chamberlain Prince Ra'd Ben Zeid Sunday welcomes 28 Jordanians returning home from Albania aboard a Royal Jordanian air force plane. His Majesty King Hussein Friday gave directives to the Foreign Ministry to arrange the airlift of Jordanians living in that country (Petra photo)

Japan supports Ma'an disabled care centre

AMMAN (J.T.) — Japanese Ambassador to Jordan Takayuki Kimura and South Society for Handicapped Care in Ma'an Chairman Matar Mohammad Abu Rakhiah Sunday signed an agreement whereby Tokyo will provide the society with a grant of \$99,655 to purchase medical equipment and a central heating system, a Japanese embassy statement said.

Attending the signing ceremony was HRH Prince Ra'd Ben Zeid, who is chairperson of several national organisations dedicated to the welfare of the handicapped.

The South Society for Handicapped Care provides educational and vocational training to the disabled.

In order to expand its scope of services, the society has launched an ambitious plan under the patronage of HRH Prince Firas Ben Ra'd to establish a new care centre, which will provide physiotherapeutic and diagnostic treatment to low-income disabled persons of the region for reasonable fees.

This donation will be the final project for the Japanese fiscal year of 1996 to be provided under the Japanese government's Grant Assistance for Grassroots Projects, in which grant aid is extended to non-profit organisations (NGOs) and local governments.

The signing ceremony, held at the Japanese Ambassador's residence, was also attended by Tawfiq Kreishan, Khaled Ghezawi and other leaders of the Ma'an community.

Mayor laments exclusion from feasibility study

KARAK (Petra) — Karak Mayor Ahmad Mahadin Sunday said a Japanese team entrusted with studying the feasibility of establishing an industrial estate in Karak, among other governorates, recommended the establishment of industrial estates in Tafleeh, Ma'an and Aqaba, but not in Karak.

Speaking at a press conference, Mr. Mahadin explained that the Japanese team's report gave priority to the establishment of industrial estates in Ma'an, Tafleeh and Aqaba, but completely disregarded Karak.

He stressed that Jordan Industrial Estates Corporation (JIEC) has invited bids for designing the infrastructure of an industrial estate in Karak, saying that there are neither allocations nor a time-bound programme for the establishment of such an estate in Karak.

Mr. Mahadin stated that the availability of a Japanese financier serves an incentive for the creation of an industrial estate in Karak, and stressed the need for clear-cut instructions for the JIEC to embark on executive steps to establish the estate.

The mayor maintained that the establishment of the estate in Karak would boost economic activity in the government and ease unemployment, through the provision of 20,000 job opportunities for job seekers.

Reviewing the municipality's activities and plans, Mr. Mahadin said that the municipality has revived the Karak Development Corporation, adding that the municipality is currently planning to construct a new social home on a 30 square-metre plot of land set aside by the Ministry of Agriculture for this purpose.

JBA invites members to defend Dakamseh

By Lola Keilani
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — The Jordan Bar Association (JBA) Sunday invited its members to volunteer to defend Ahmad Dakamseh, the soldier who shot and killed seven Israeli schoolgirls and injured six in Baqoura, last Thursday, a JBA source said.

The source said that the JBA will also demand that lawyers be present during Mr. Dakamseh's interrogation and is currently forming a team to represent the soldier, who will face trial in a military court when charged.

"We have not been directly in touch with Mr. Dakamseh but we are coordinating with members of his family," a JBA source said.

Only when the military prosecutor general begins interrogating Dakamseh will his lawyers be allowed to attend.

According to the law, when a crime or felony is committed, the accused, regardless of civil or military status, will be tried in accordance with criminal law. As such, military personnel are entitled to assign civil lawyers to defend their cases in military court, a JBA source said.

However, Attorney Hamzeh Haddad told the Jordan Times that the major difference between the military and civil courts is that military court verdicts cannot be appealed.

He added that the military court's ruling will have to be authorised by the Commander in Chief of the Armed Forces, who also retains the right to order a retrial or, conversely, reject the verdict.

Also according to the law, an execution cannot be instituted unless His Majesty the King endorses the verdict, Mr. Haddad said.

The King can also issue a special pardon, he added. Lawyers, interviewed by the Jordan Times, also criticised the media which, they said, has already convicted Mr. Dakamseh.

Attorney Saleh Armouti maintained that any suspect is innocent until proven guilty and that the media should not randomly make accusations before a just trial and ensuing verdict.

A request by Israeli authorities to attend the interrogation is unacceptable and will also be contested, he concluded.

Condolences For Nazeah Fouzi Bayyat

will be received by his wife Marie and daughter Rea at their home on Monday, March 17 and Tuesday, March 18 in the morning.

The American Women of Amman wish to express their condolences to Marie, member and former AWA president upon the death of her husband, Nazeah Fouzi Bayyat

What's Going On

CONCERT

Organ concert by Spanish musician Mar Padros at De La Salle College, Jabal Al Hussein at 8:00 p.m.

EXHIBITIONS

* Display of handwoven products, marking Mother's Day at Bani Hamida House, Jabal Amman (Tel. 658696/7), until March 21.

FIFTH THEATRE FESTIVAL

Two plays entitled "The Mysterious Offer" and "The Screams" at the Royal Cultural Centre respectively at 7:00 p.m. and 8:30 p.m.

FILM

* "Je Suis le Seigneur du Château" at the French Cultural Centre at 8:30 p.m.

LECTURE

Towards a Cooperative Security System in the Mediterranean by Lieutenant-General Carl von Clausewitz at the Institute of Diplomacy at 4:00 p.m.

Court hands 'healer' life sentence for murder

Rana Hussein
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — The Amman Criminal Court Sunday sentenced a 47-year-old self-described "healer" to life imprisonment with hard labour for robbing and killing a woman in February of last year.

The court tribunal, headed by Justices Mahmoud Bawadi, Mifteh Mubeidin and Khalaf Rakad declared Mustafa Abdul Mustafa guilty of murdering Heigir Ali, 44, in his Jerash home on Feb. 8.

The court acquitted his 47-year-old brother Mohammad of complicity with the murder.

According to court documents, the victim was a long-time acquaintance of Mr. Mustafa and she often visited him to obtain medication for stomach pains. On the day of the incident, court transcripts said, Ms. Ali went to Mr. Mustafa's house for medication.

As Mr. Mustafa had recently argued with Ms. Ali, he decided to kill her both for reasons of vengeance and financial gain as, the transcripts stated, she was wearing gold on her person.

"When Mr. Mustafa espied her gold, he resolved to kill her by mixing poison with an herbal drink," the court said. "He gave the mix to

the woman to drink as a medicine."

The woman, a nurse who worked at the Jerash Health Centre, and a mother of four, died in four minutes, court papers said.

In its ruling, the court decided to amend original charges of premeditated murder, filed by the prosecution, as it felt that Mr. Mustafa had not previously planned to kill the woman.

He then bound the woman's body, placed it in a box and travelled to the Jineh Highway in the Sukhneh area of Zarqa, court transcripts said.

"Mr. Mustafa placed the box on a pile of stones and straw in a deserted area near the highway, poured kerosene and set the woman ablaze in an attempt to conceal his crime," the court said.

He then sold the gold for JD 805.

Mr. Mustafa and his brother Mohammad were apprehended by authorities almost two weeks after the murder was committed.

The verdict will automatically be reviewed by the Court of Cassation within the next 30 days.

Errata: In yesterday's article, "Internet café/ bookshop to open in Amman," due to typographical errors, the Jordan Times mistakenly reported that computers in the café would be rented for the sum of 14 to 15 dinars — the actual sum is 4 to 5 dinars. The article also stated that the café would have a seating capacity of 900, instead of the actual 100. Finally, the 700 coffee flavours should have been totalled at 70. The café will have its "soft opening" today. The Jordan Times sincerely regrets these errors and any inconvenience which may have resulted thereof.

Zaire rebels say they have pushed beyond Kisangani

GOMA, Zaire (AFP) — Triumphant Zairean rebels said Sunday they had pushed beyond Kisangani, the strategic eastern city they seized Saturday, and had taken a town on the Zambian border as they pressed on with a massive offensive.

"We are beyond Kisangani in order to secure the whole region," rebel spokesman Raphael Ghenda told journalists here, without giving details.

The rebels seized Kisangani Saturday, their biggest prize yet in a five-month advance through eastern Zaire, after government troops and mercenaries fled in disarray.

After the fall, rebel leader Laurent Desire Kabila vowed his forces would push "as far as Kinshasa" and dismissed a new United Nations bid to broker a ceasefire between his forces and the regime of President Mobutu Sese Seko.

Special envoy Mohammad Sahnoun held talks with Mr. Kabila Saturday but left Goma empty-handed.

A U.N. spokesman in New York said later that Mr. Sahnoun had briefed U.N. chief Kofi Annan on his talks with Mr. Kabila and had confirmed that the rebel leader was still insisting that a truce should come after negotiations, not before, as stipulated in a five-point U.N. plan.

Kinshasa, for its part, is maintaining a stony silence following the fall of Kisangani, a major transport hub on the Zaire River and capital of the diamond-rich Upper Zaire province, the loss of which is bound to be a

Zaire



severe blow.

Fully 24 hours after the town was overrun by the rebels, neither the government nor the army leadership had commented.

Mr. Ghenda said the rebels were also advancing in Shaba, a rich southern mining region, and had taken control of the town of Pweto on the Zambian border.

The fall of Pweto puts the insurgents within 400 kilometres of the regional capital, Lubumbashi, which has lucrative cobalt and copper mines, and radio reports Sunday said the rebels were claiming this as their latest target.

The rebels are also at the edge of the neighbouring East Kasai province.

As the rebels pushed on with their advance, the European Union issued an appeal to all sides in the fighting to respect the lives of refugees and local residents.

The European Union has learned with deep concern of the rapid deterioration of

the situation in Zaire," a declaration by the Dutch presidency published Sunday in Apeldoorn, the Netherlands, said. It "appeals to all parties in the conflict to respect both the refugees and the Zairean population."

Humanitarian organisations said Sunday the capture of Kisangani had left up to 100,000 refugees stranded in the region to fend for themselves.

"This is the time for a ceasefire, for a real humanitarian corridor that would allow U.S. access to the refugees," Paul Stromberg, spokesman for the U.N. High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), said.

He said the refugees were stranded in the town of Ubundu, located 150 kilometres south of Kisangani, where humanitarian organisations had regrouped their aid operations in the region before the fall of the town.

Brenda Barton, spokeswoman for the U.N. World Food Programme (WFP),

said that the refugees at Ubundu needed a minimum of 60 tonnes of food a day.

The WFP resumed relief flights to Kisangani last Thursday, but grounded them Saturday as the rebels approached. The agency had been planning to send in a big Ilyushin cargo plane twice a day to Kisangani from Mwanza, in Tanzania, taking in 40 tonnes each time.

The WFP had also been feeding 35,000 displaced Zaireans in Kisangani, but many civilians have fled the city, and it was unclear Sunday how many of the displaced remained.

Ubundu, which is linked by rail with Kisangani, is still technically in government hands, and Ms. Barton said the WFP would need permission from the Kinshasa government as well as the rebels to resume flights.

Mr. Kabila's spokesman said Sunday that the rebels would "work with the UNHCR" but would continue their advance on Ubundu.

Meanwhile, Kisangani's fall was greeted with celebrations by residents in Goma, who said the development made their position more secure.

"We have avoided the bombs," one local man, a celebratory glass in his hand, said Saturday night.

"Without that, Mobutu's soldiers could have come back and accused us of collaborating with the rebels," added Christian, a taxi driver.

"Now people will really think that Kabila is strong," said another young Zairean.

Australian cattle cloners face wary farmers

SYDNEY (AP) — An Australian breakthrough in cattle embryo cloning has scientists hailing the birth of a new industry — and farmers dismissing the advance as almost irrelevant and not even proper cloning.

A team of Melbourne geneticists has cloned 470 cattle embryos from a single embryo in the largest mass-cloning of embryos yet seen.

Scientists behind the achievement hope to be in pilot commercial production of cloned animals in three to four years.

But before they start making any money, Australia's fledgling cloners will have to await the outcome of a debate on the ethics of cloning, settle questions about biodiversity, and fall into line with government guidelines yet to be written.

They will also have to convince sceptical livestock breeders that cloning cows is more advantageous than traditional breeding techniques.

Farming industry officials said Friday that with Australia already the world's largest exporter of meat from a herd of 25 million head, the Melbourne cloning development would mean comparatively little to the industry.

"I can't see how 400 embryos is any closer than two decades away from ha-

ving any influence on meat consumption," Justin Toohey, executive director of the Cattle Council of Australia, told Reuters.

Other industry officials said the technique pioneered at Melbourne's Monash University was not even cloning at all.

"It's existing embryo multiplication as distinct from cloning. Cloning is taking mature bits of an animal and trying to get an embryo from that," said Allan Humphries, spokesman for the Meat Research Corp., which advises the government on meat industry issues.

"There's quite a difference between embryo multiplication and cloning. Cloning is taking an existing thing and trying to get a copy from that — that's what they did in Scotland."

Last month, Scottish scientist Ian Wilmut introduced the cloned sheep "Dolly" to the world after producing her from a cell taken from an adult sheep.

The worldwide debate on the ethics of cloning, especially human cloning, which followed Dolly's debut has spread to Australia as well on news of the Melbourne results.

"Our interest is purely agricultural," Bernie Harford, one of the scientists behind the cloning breakthrough, told Reuters, refusing to discuss the possibility

of human cloning. Agricultural specialists, more concerned with breeding techniques than the ethical debate, said the embryo breakthrough was actually inferior to natural reproduction.

"We can breed the best animal now anyway. Cloning has to produce 500-600 eggs and you only get one winner. (Through natural mating) We get a winner almost every time," Mr. Humphries said.

Mr. Harford, chief executive of the Genetics Australia Cooperative, rates the embryo cloning as less spectacular than the Scottish process but says it is "very encouraging."

The next target is to produce large numbers of embryos consistently and then healthy cows from the embryos.

Mr. Harford said it was hoped that the new process would be brought to pilot commercial production in three to four years.

With research partner Alan Trounson of Monash University's Institute of Reproduction and Development, Mr. Harford sees the cloned embryos leading to mass-production of elite beasts.

The embryo-cloning experiment could ultimately prove a success, but cloning would accelerate both genetic defects and advances in certain breeds because it

avoided the slow processes of generational change. Cattle Council's Toohey said.

Mr. Toohey and others see ethics and inbreeding in cloned herds imposing a ceiling on the use of cattle clones.

The real key to man's manipulation of animal reproduction, scientists said, would be the transgenic production of the best possible beast, then the cloning and mass multiplication of that animal through a combination of the Scottish and Australian techniques.

Oliver Mayo, chief of the Animal Production Division of the Commonwealth Scientific and Industrial Organisation (CSIRO), described the Harford-Trounson breakthrough as "a terrific technical achievement."

"But it's a production process, not a research process," he said.

Embryos have been cloned for many years around the world, other scientists say. This limits the significance of the Australian breakthrough to one of quantity, not quality, of the beast produced, they said.

Genetics Australia aims to produce 50 to 60 cattle with the same genetics and test them in the field, with best performers chosen for reproduction of their genetic pool, genetic Australia's Harford said.

Yeltsin tells government to act on army, coal crises

MOSCOW (R) — President Boris Yeltsin ordered the Russian government Saturday to take immediate steps to remedy financial crises in the army and the coal industry.

The Kremlin Press Service said in a statement that Mr. Yeltsin was replying to warnings about the state of the armed forces from Defence Minister Igor Rodionov and cash problems in the coal industry from the head of the state mines group Rosugol.

The government is in something close to limbo ahead of a planned major shake-up to be announced Monday or Tuesday.

"The worsening situation in the financing of food

supplies to the Russian Armed Forces and other troops is impermissible," Mr. Yeltsin told the government. "Take steps urgently."

He recently accused Mr. Rodionov of "whingeing" for his repeated warnings about the poor state of the army.

Echoing comments by the defence minister, a former colonel in the Strategic Missile Command warned Saturday in the popular daily Komsomolskaya Pravda that Russia's nuclear missile systems were no longer reliable.

"We could launch an accidental nuclear strike on the United States in seconds," Robert Bykov wrote in the article, which

was presented in a sensational manner with an artist's impression of a New York Skyline under an atomic mushroom cloud.

Mr. Yeltsin also gave the government two weeks to determine the coal industry's budget for 1997 and settle the state's debts to the sector run up in January and February. He emphasised that the Social Welfare of Miners should have priority.

In less than two weeks, Russia's main trade unions plan to stage a national strike. The miners, many of whom are among millions of workers left unpaid for months, have played a prominent role in recent industrial action.

On the same theme, Mr. Yeltsin told the government it had failed to implement his orders from last June to improve funding for the Hermitage Art Museum in St. Petersburg, one of the world's leading galleries with a priceless collection of treasures.

"I ask you to normalise this situation, which has deteriorated, in the promptest manner," Mr. Yeltsin said.

Back to active politics after eight months of illness, Mr. Yeltsin blasted the government in a state of the nation address 10 days ago and demanded sweeping changes to avert a deepening social and economic crisis.



World Chess Champion Garry Kasparov (left) speaks to delegates of the Congress of the newly founded Russia's Popular Republican Party as Alexander Lebed (centre) listens to an aide Saturday. Kasparov has backed Gen. Lebed's idea of forming a new party (Reuters photo)

Lebed's new party ejects anti-Semite

MOSCOW (R) — General Alexander Lebed faced an awkward moment Saturday when a supporter of his new Russian political party serendipitously turned up with an anti-Semitic verse in front of a massed television cameras.

The tough-talking expatriate looked on stony-faced, then had the man bodily ejected from the party's inauguration ceremony after a word in his ear from world chess champion Garry Kasparov, who is a prominent Lebed supporter and half-Jewish.

The offender, dressed in combat fatigues, was identified by Russian media as Georgy Getman, chairman

of an association for army officers known as The Shield.

Taking his turn signing a book of support for Gen. Lebed's new Russian Popular Republican Party, he recited a patriotic verse which concluded with a disparaging reference to Jews.

After a word from Mr. Kasparov, sitting at Gen. Lebed's right hand, the former Kremlin security chief quoted 19th century author Nikolai Gogol, saying Russia suffered from "a lot of idiots."

The man was then bundled from the room by aides.

Gen. Lebed, who hails

from Cossack stock in southern Russia, where there is a long tradition of anti-Semitism, has had to deny in the past that he has anti-Jewish prejudices.

U.S. President Bill Clinton demanded an explanation from the Kremlin last year after Gen. Lebed, during his time on President Boris Yeltsin's staff, was quoted as saying Russia had three official religions — Orthodox Christianity, Islam and Buddhism.

The country is estimated to have the world's third largest Jewish population after the United States and Israel.

Azerbaijan seeks international inspection of Armenia's weapons

BAKU, Azerbaijan (AP) — Days after Russia admitted supplying arms to Armenia, Azerbaijan's defence minister requested Saturday that international inspectors check the extent of Armenia's weaponry.

Defence Minister Hasan Hasanov told a meeting of 10 foreign ambassadors that Armenia's weapons may exceed the limit allowed under the Conventional Forces in Europe Treaty (CFE), and asked CFE members to investigate.

Russian Defence Minister Igor Rodionov said earlier in the week that in the past two years Armenia has received millions of dollars worth of Russian tanks and armoured vehicles. He said

they were shipped without the Russian government's knowledge.

The report caused an uproar in Azerbaijan, locked in a nine-year conflict with Armenia over the disputed territory of Nagorno-Karabakh. Azerbaijan has long accused Russia — which has been mediating the conflict — of being biased in favour of Armenia.

The arms deals "showed the hypocritical policy of Armenia, which along with assurances of readiness for negotiations is secretly arming itself," Mr. Hasanov said.

Mr. Hasanov also appealed to the countries neighbouring Armenia, saying the acquisition of weapons

by Armenia is a threat not only to Azerbaijan but to others as well.

Armenia and Azerbaijan have been feuding since 1988 over Nagorno-Karabakh — a mountainous enclave located inside Azerbaijan but mostly populated by ethnic Armenians. With Armenia's support, Nagorno-Karabakh forces drove Azerbaijani government troops out of the enclave and seized some Azerbaijani territory as well.

A 1994 truce ended the war, which killed 15,000 people. But peace talks have stalled and numerous mediation attempts have failed.

Italian journalist arrested at Japanese nuclear plant

TOKYO (R) — An Italian photojournalist was arrested early Sunday for trespassing within 300 metres of the site of Japan's worst nuclear accident, adding to security concerns at the plant.

Police said Antonio Pagnotta, 40, was arrested on suspicion of illegally entering the Tokaimura nuclear complex, where a fire and explosion Tuesday exposed 37 workers to low-level radiation.

Mr. Pagnotta entered the gate of the nuclear fuel reprocessing complex and climbed over a two metre inner fence without being noticed by guards, police said. He was captured after security cameras filmed him wandering between 200-300 metres from the

explosion site, they said. The journalist, identified as a correspondent for an Italian news photo agency, was quoted by police as saying he was trying to photograph the accident site. His camera and photographs were seized by police.

The intrusion was the latest incident to underscore security concerns about the plant, operated by state-run power reactor and Nuclear Fuel Development Corp. (PNC).

On Sunday the PNC acknowledged it did not warn a group of students and foreign trainees who were touring the facility, 160 kilometres northeast of Tokyo, the day the fire broke out Tuesday morning. A total of 64 people

toured the plant on the day of the accident and were not informed of the dangers and were not checked for exposure to radiation, a PNC official said.

Investigation of the accident has so far revealed lapses in safety standards, including outdated firefighting equipment and delays in alerting both residents and central authorities of the crisis.

Mr. Pagnotta, who caused a media uproar last April when he secretly photographed doomsday Guru Shoko Asahara in court on the first day of his trial for the 1995 Tokyo subway gas attack, was being held for questioning, a police spokesman said.

Retired KGB agent downplays role of Rosenberg

NEW YORK (R) — A retired KGB agent who was the most direct contact between Moscow and Julius and Ethel Rosenberg, executed in 1953 for espionage, says the couple did not provide Russia with any useful material about the atomic bomb, two major U.S. newspapers reported in Sunday editions.

In an interview at his Moscow apartment Saturday, Alexander Feklisov, 86, told the New York Times the Rosenbergs were executed unjustly. "He didn't understand anything about the atomic bomb and he couldn't help us. And still they killed them. It was a contract murder," Mr. Feklisov is quoted as saying.

However, Julius Rosenberg did give away military secrets, the agent told the Times and the Washington Post in separate interviews, both published Sunday.

Mr. Feklisov is known in the United States for his behind-the-scenes role as an intermediary between the KGB and the White House during the 1962 Cuban missile crisis.

The Times said his declining health and his strong loyalty to Rosenberg prompted him to speak out about what happened 47 years ago. He told the newspaper he did not have permission from the KGB's successor, the Russian Foreign Intelligence Service, to tell his side of the story.

"The Times said a spokesman in Moscow for their Foreign Intelligence Service would not comment on the Rosenberg's or about what Mr. Feklisov had to say about them."

The former agent met with Rosenberg about 50 times between 1943 and 1946, the Post reported. He was also quoted as saying the execution of Ethel Rosenberg was unfair since she had not actively spied herself.

"She had nothing to do with this — she was completely innocent. I think she knew, but for that you don't kill people," Mr. Feklisov told the Times.

The Rosenbergs were convicted mainly on the testimony of Ethel Rosenberg's brother, David Greenglass, and his wife Ruth who were arrested for conspiracy and confessed. Greenglass was a low-level worker at the Los Alamos, New Mexico, atom bomb project.

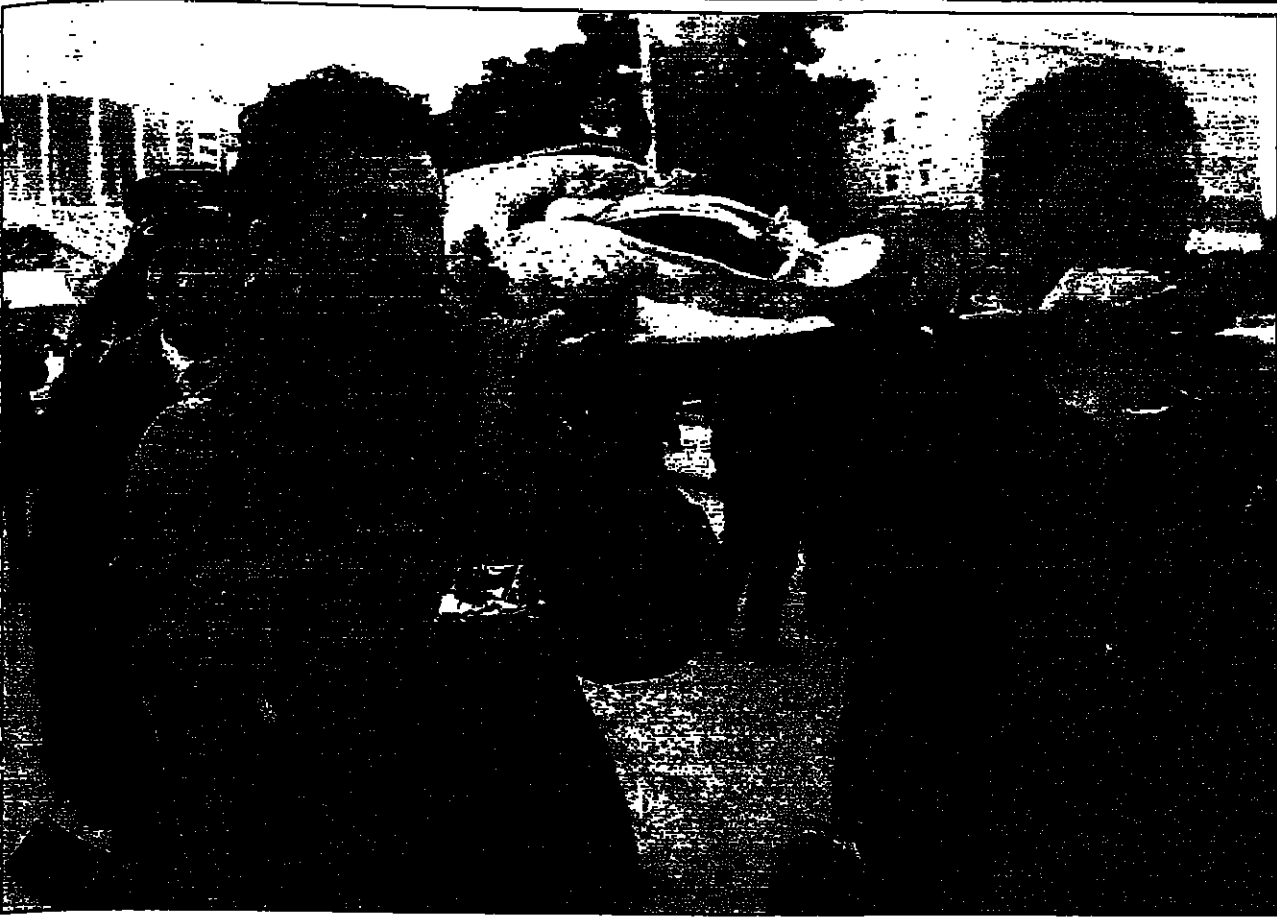
Mr. Feklisov also calls former Soviet leader Nikita Khrushchev "a silly man" who "didn't understand anything" for writing in his memoirs that the Rosenbergs "provided very significant help in accelerating the production of our atomic bomb."

In the article, Mr. Feklisov said Rosenberg gave him a rough sketch of a "lens mould," a bomb part he got from his brother-in-law that the former KGB agent insisted was useless. "He gave us a childish scribble — it was meaningless," he told the Times.

The Discovery channel will air a documentary film about the Rosenberg case, quoting Mr. Feklisov next Sunday, the Post said.

The Post said the Rosenbergs' children, Michael and Robert Meeropol, declined an invitation to meet with Mr. Feklisov during a two-week visit to the United States last September.

Michael Meeropol told the paper the family was reserving judgment on the Russian's statements until after the screening of the television documentary.



Albanian policemen carry the body of a dead comrade through the streets of Durres Saturday. The policeman was killed one hour previously by an unidentified gunman at a government road block, as Durres is still under government control (Reuters photo)

Kashmir journalist killed

SRINAGAR, India (AFP) — A Muslim journalist who made documentaries for India's state-run television was shot dead Sunday near the Kashmir Police Headquarters here, police said.

Syedani Shafi, 42, died instantly after being shot while driving his car in a busy district of this summer capital of Kashmir by four armed men who escaped, police sources said. Shafi's guard was also killed in the attack.

The police said earlier that Shafi was killed at his house. No one claimed responsibility for the death, but police sources said Muslim separatists in the trouble-torn Himalayan state were to blame. Shafi was given protection in 1994 following death threats from the rebels.

Shafi produced a popular television programme called "Kashmir File," which the militants alleged dished out government propaganda and criticised the separatist struggle raging since 1989.

He was the eighth Kashmir journalist to die in the state. A news reader in the government-owned television was killed in January at a hotel. AFP photographer Mushtaq Ali was killed when a bomb exploded at the Srinagar BBC office in 1995.

Kashmir's Urdu-language press has been on an indefinite strike since March 2 after a pro-Pakistan Muslim militant group "banned" the publication of five newspapers for their alleged pro-government slant.

Singapore premier pledges to improve ties with Malaysia

SINGAPORE (AFP) — Singapore Premier Goh Chok Tong has pledged to work "very hard" to improve ties with Malaysia, moving to end a diplomatic row sparked by patriarch Lee Kuan Yew's remarks on crime in a Malaysian province.

But Mr. Goh said it was up to Mr. Lee, who has already offered an unprecedented public apology, to decide whether to retract the remarks which outraged the neighbour.

"I have tried and I will try very hard to improve relations with Malaysia. That is my job," Mr. Goh, who succeeded Mr. Lee as premier in 1990, said late Saturday.

"I want good relations with Malaysia, and I believe Malaysian Prime Minister Mahathir (Mohammad) also wants good relations with Singapore," he said.

Using football terminology, Mr. Goh said Mr. Lee was "offside" when he commented the southern Malaysian state of Johore neighbouring Singapore was "notorious for shootings, muggings and car-jackings."

"He recognised he was offside," Mr. Goh, 55, said in remarks published by the Sunday Times. "He apologised to Malaysians and the Malaysian government."

"I would want to move on from here," he added. "I do not want to spend too much time looking back, we should try to move forward with the best of our ability."

The comments were Mr. Goh's first on the episode, which underscored how sensitive relations between the neighbours continue to be more than three decades after their separation.

Singapore, brought into the Malaysian Federation in 1963 by Mr. Lee as British colonial rule came to an end, broke away in 1965 after a bitter disagreement with Kuala Lumpur over a policy favouring native Malays. Singapore is predomi-

nantly ethnic Chinese.

Mr. Lee, 73, described Johore as crime-ridden in an affidavit supporting libel lawsuits against lawyer Tang Liang Hong, a political opponent who fled to the Malaysian state saying he feared for his safety here.

"It did not make any sense for a person who claims to be fearful of his life to go to a place like Johore," Mr. Lee said.

The comments triggered an official Malaysian protest, demands that Mr. Lee apologise and retract his remarks and wide-spread condemnation from Malaysian groups.

Mr. Lee, who stepped down in 1990 after 31 years as prime minister but remains in the cabinet as senior minister, apologised Thursday.

He said he had no intention of causing offence and that his perceptions about Johore were based on press reports.

Malaysian Foreign Minister Abdullah Badawi said Sunday that a minister should not express the kind of views Mr. Lee did on Johore.

"This is because it is difficult to determine if the views are personal or official, and what is voiced by a cabinet minister usually reflects the government's stand," Mr. Abdullah said.

The youth wing of Prime Minister Mahathir's United Malays National Organisation (UMNO) said Mr. Goh's statement indicated that the Singapore government viewed Mr. Lee's statement lightly.

Mr. Lee should be removed from the cabinet, UMNO youth's chief Ahmad Zahid Hamidi said.

The Malaysian cabinet is expected to discuss Mr. Lee's apology Wednesday. Some Malaysian groups have said the apology was not enough and that Mr. Lee should retract his comments.

Sri Lankan political violence escalates

Sri Lankan bomber explodes in mid-air

COLOMBO (AFP) — Political violence has escalated in Sri Lanka despite appeals for calm ahead of local elections seen as a key mid-term test for President Chandrika Kumaratunga, police said Sunday.

Nearly 1,500 complaints of polls-related clashes have been received since nominations for the March 21 local council election closed just over a month ago, a police spokesman said.

"The most common complaints are of arson, destruction of property and physical violence," the spokesman said. "The most violent so far was the double murder of a government mp and a bodyguard."

Clashes continued unabated despite mounting calls for peace by human rights groups, non-governmental organisations, the Buddhist and Roman Catholic clergy and leaders of political parties.

An amnesty to surrender thousands of illegal firearms held by politicians expired Saturday with poor results and a police crackdown has failed to recover more than a few thousand weapons, officials said.

A private watch-dog organisation called "CMEV" said supporters of Kumaratunga's People's Alliance (PA) and the main opposition United National Party (UNP) were responsible for most of the violence.

A UNP legislator was remanded Friday in connection with a shooting near the capital while another opposition legislator was in custody following the murder of a ruling PA lawmaker last month, police said.

Campaigning for Friday's election must end by midnight Tuesday and, according to election laws there can be no victory celebrations for a week after the results are announced.

"We are deploying the entire police strength to man polling booths and ensure security to counting centres," a police spokesman said.

At stake in Friday's elections is more than outcome of polls for 238 local councils. Analysts say the results will be seen as an indicator of support for Kumaratunga's two-and-a-half-year rule and her proposed political reforms.

Some 9.37 million people over the age of 18 years are eligible to vote in the elections, but analysts say the mounting violence may discourage many from going to the polling booths.

Voters will elect 3,567 councillors from 18,586 candidates.

His obligation to improve public hygiene, and is unconstitutional.

The plaintiffs cited article 25 of the constitution, which says: "All people shall have the right to maintain the minimum standards of wholesome and cultured living."

They demanded he stop smoking and pay 500,000 yen (\$4,100) damages.

Mr. Hashimoto's blunt response was that he would not quit.

His preferred brand has 16-milligrams of tar, "heavy I stop smoking" as the anti-tobacco lobby storms the barricades anew.

Five Japanese anti-smokers filed a lawsuit in the Nagoya district court on March 7 against Prime Minister Ryutaro Hashimoto, claiming his heavy smoking violates the human rights of non-smokers, is a failure in

Albania back from the brink as EU despatches advisory mission

TIRANA (AFP) — After two months of anarchy, Albania appeared Sunday to have pulled back from the brink, as European Union (EU) foreign ministers agreed to send a mission to help the country rebuild its crumbling civilian, police and military infrastructure.

Calm appeared to have returned to the capital early Sunday, although some 3,000 demonstrators carrying flowers marched through the centre of Tirana in memory of those killed in the unrest. Some 75 people have died this month and more than 600 have been wounded.

A high-level delegation, led by Count Jan D'Assembourg, a senior Dutch Foreign Ministry official, was to leave for Tirana Sunday to begin preparations for the advisory mission.

The mission would be charged with "building up Albania's police and military infrastructure," a German official said, following an EU meeting at the Dutch town of Apeldoorn, making it clear that the primary responsibility for restoring order would lie with the Albanians themselves.

The scale and nature of the planned intervention — a response to desperate appeals from the leaders of the crisis-hit Balkan state — was left open.

Crucially, there was no agreement on whether there would be a need to send troops to provide security for such a mission, with a statement simply stating that "consideration will be given to the needs of the mission for protection."

In Tirana, tanks and armoured personnel carriers patrolled the streets overnight Saturday in a further demonstration of force by police and volunteers armed by the authorities.

It is not entirely clear who controls these militia but the effect of their deployment seems to have brought an uneasy peace to the city where the level of gunfiring and tension has dropped dramatically.

Several dozen volunteers queued up outside police stations Saturday to receive a weapon and claim a salary several times the average. Although few said they had previous police experience, they said they wanted to restore order in the city.

The militia have been seen in other towns but much of the country is essentially still under the control of rebel councils made up of self-appointed leaders. Criminality is rife, however, in most areas.

Restoring order has also taken the sting out of the demands for the resignation of the Albanian President Sali Berisha, whom many blame for creating the chaos that brought the country on the brink of civil war.

Late Saturday, Mr. Berisha issued a statement declaring

that he had no intention of resigning unless his party lost elections to be held by June at the latest.

In a presidential communique, Mr. Berisha said that to resign now "would create divisions and could aggravate the crisis," he further claimed that while some "armed individuals and groups in certain areas" wanted him to go "there is also a silent majority ... which supports" him.

U.S. officials said at the weekend that Mr. Berisha's credibility "is weak" because of the crisis in Albania, but diplomats here warned of the possibility of a power vacuum if he stepped down.

Some observers in Tirana also think that with the decrease in tension in Albania, the issue of Mr. Berisha's immediate departure has subsided. The fact that there is now a new government of reconciliation — in place for the past week — is also helping, they said.

Other observers fear that while the crisis might be receding, pressure could quickly build up again on several fronts that could explode into more unrest and anarchy.

Shortages of food and supplies could be one factor. The bands of heavily armed criminals that are going on a looting spree of the country are another, observers said.

Meanwhile, hundreds more Albanians crossed the stormy Adriatic Sea overnight to southern Italy, where officials said facilities for sheltering those fleeing the violence-ravaged country were overflowing.

Nearly 1,200 Albanian refugees, including many women and children, arrived in the southern ports of Brindisi and Bari on board four vessels in the early hours of Sunday, Coast Guards said.

No official figures were available for the total number who have fled the unrest in Albania. However, late Saturday there were reportedly some 3,000 Albanians in the southern province of Apulia, and an administrative official in the Adriatic port of Brindisi, Andrea Gentile, said refugee accommodation was full.

"It is not a question of closing the port," the official added, "but the reception centres are full. If more boats arrive in Brindisi, they can dock, but the passengers will have to stay onboard."

Of those who arrived overnight, 858 came aboard an Albanian Navy patrol boat, which ran aground at the entrance to Brindisi.

With a force 3-4 gale blowing, disembarkation of the refugees was only completed Sunday morning.

The refugees were piled one on top of the other on the 50-metre (165 feet) "F324" patrol boat.

Port authorities said they were disembarked with the help of four motor boats, a naval unit, tugs and two helicopters.

Pakistan says ties with India can be transformed

Indian police arrest 5 for spying for Pakistan

NEW DELHI (R) — Indian police have arrested five people, one of them an Indian army officer, on charges of spying for Pakistan's Inter-Services Intelligence Agency, the Press Trust of India (PTI) said Sunday.

The news agency quoted a senior police official as saying the five were arrested Friday in the northwestern state of Rajasthan for supplying secret defence documents to the Pakistani Intelligence Agency.

The men said they had developed close contacts with people who were privy to Indian defence secrets, and procured secret documents in exchange for huge amounts of cash and other incentives, PTI said, without giving further details.

Police in Rajasthan, which shares a land border with Pakistan, were not immediately available for comment. Pakistan Saturday said it was releasing 38 children who were among about 100 people detained aboard Indian fishing boats caught in Pakistani waters. The release was a goodwill gesture ahead of talks with arch-rival India this month, it said.

Officials from the foreign ministries of both countries are due to meet in India later this month, to renew talks on a long-standing quarrel over Kashmir. India controls two-thirds of Kashmir and Pakistan the rest.

Indian Foreign Minister Inder Kumar Gujral has invited Mr. Ayub to stay on for two days of talks after foreign ministers of the non-aligned movement meet in New Delhi on April 7-8.

Mr. Ayub said he had accepted Mr. Gujral's invitation, received Saturday, in principle, but would await the outcome of the foreign secretaries' talks before taking a final decision.

"It depends how the talks go and develop at the secretaries' level," he told reporters. "It depends how the atmosphere is built after March 28. There have to be positive indications."

Mr. Ayub said it was not clear if Mr. Sharif and Mr. Deve Gowda would hold talks on the sidelines of a South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation summit in the Maldives in May.

"The agenda to sit down for the prime ministers has still not been indicated or finalised," Mr. Ayub said.

"No indication from India yet, other than the Indian foreign minister's statement that this meeting will take place."

Mr. Ayub, while stressing the importance of resolving the longstanding quarrel over Kashmir, highlighted the potential benefits of better relations between the

arch-rivals.

"There is no territorial claim or dispute on the international border... There are no disputes other than Kashmir."

"So why are we denying our people their rights to clean drinking water, sanitation, health, medical facilities, roads, employment," he asked.

"Has anybody sat down in India or Pakistan to calculate how much they have spent on defence from 1948 and how long we continue doing this? It is doing India no good. The benefit is going to foreign arms traders."

India and Pakistan have fought three wars since they emerged as independent nations from the blood-stained partition of the former British Raj in the sub-continent 50 years ago.

Two of those conflicts were sparked by tension over Kashmir, of which India controls two-thirds and Pakistan the rest.

"We can compete, India and Pakistan, on an economic front," Mr. Ayub proposed. "Compete on who gives a better quality of life to their citizens. Compete with strengthening democratic institutions. Compete in giving stability to this part of the world."

"The leadership has to sit down and look to the future. In the past there have been secretary level talks, talks at the ministers level which have come to nothing. But the world atmosphere has changed," he said.

Japan's anti-smokers go after chain-smoking premier

TOKYO (AFP) — "Today I smoke" is the slogan for a cigarette brand and a philosophy worth \$17 billion a year in tax from more than a third of the Japanese populace led by their chain-smoking premier.

Unlike just about every other place in the world, Japan is an island of relative tolerance, where a smoker can light up almost anywhere without being made to feel like a pariah.

But Japan Tobacco Inc. (JT) may need to look again at its original idea of "tomorrow I stop smoking" as the anti-tobacco lobby storms the barricades anew.

Five Japanese anti-smokers filed a lawsuit in the Nagoya district court on March 7 against Prime Minister Ryutaro Hashimoto, claiming his heavy smoking violates the human rights of non-smokers, is a failure in

manual on how to deal with criticism.

Most of Asia, including heavy-smoking China with 350 million smokers for a population of just over 1.2 billion, has laws restricting smokers, as does North America and the European Union.

Everywhere, people smoke everywhere — apart from subways, buses, theatres and areas where it is deemed a fire hazard.

Smokers can enjoy restaurants and bars and may even light up in taxis.

Tobacco advertising is unfettered, although television voluntarily restricts it to between 10:54 p.m. and 5:00 a.m., Monday to Friday only.

The level of smoking is high but in slow decline and well below the 1966 peak of 83.7 per cent for men and 18.0 per cent for women.

For men, it eased from 58.8 per cent in 1995 to 57.5 per cent in 1996, while for women it declined from 15.2 per cent to 14.2 per cent, according to a national survey by Japan Tobacco Inc. (JT) of 16,000 adults.

No age breakdowns were available.

Fumisato Watanabe of the Tobacco Problems Information Centre said the lawsuit was "a warning" to Mr. Hashimoto, who is rarely seen without a cigarette in his hand and is on the record as saying he makes an economic contribution.

"He openly smokes despite his public status," said Mr. Watanabe, "and his comment on contributing to government tax revenue was just lamentable."

The Finance Ministry said tobacco tax brought in 1,042 billion Yen (\$8.5 billion) to the national trea-

sury i. the year to March 1996, with much the same expected in the current fiscal year.

A further 1,047 billion yen went to prefectural and municipal governments in the year to March 1996, with 1,039 billion yen expected in the current year, the Home Affairs Ministry said.

Tax accounts for half the price of a 220-yen pack of cigarettes.

The Tobacco Institute of Japan said 334.7 billion cigarettes were sold in the year to March 1996, up 0.1 per cent from a year earlier and worth 3,832.7 billion yen (\$31.4 billion), up 0.4 per cent.

JT, a former government monopoly, estimated its sales volume in the year to March 1997 at 262 billion cigarettes, down 0.6 per cent.

The foreign share of the market has been steadily

increasing — 22.0 per cent in the six months to September 1996, 21.2 per cent in the year to March 1996, and 19.6 per cent in fiscal 1994.

Japan is the top destination for tobacco from the United States, bastion of anti-smoking, accounting for 27.3 per cent of its exports — 67.74 million cigarettes in 1996 worth \$1.52 billion. "What Japan lacks most is administrative efforts," said one anti-smoking lobbyist, noting one third of lawmakers have links with tobacco farmers, vending machine makers, advertising and other tobacco concerns.

Then there is the prime minister, who quite happily smoked his way through a cabinet meeting last year as then Health Minister Naoto Kan appealed for support to mark World Health Organisation (WHO) "World No-Tobacco Day" last June.

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Reciprocity is vital

HIS MAJESTY King Hussein's trip to Israel yesterday to express his personal condolences to the families of the seven Israeli schoolgirls who were killed by an insane Jordanian soldier last week reflects faithfully the extent of the Monarch's personal grief and sense of profound shock over the tragedy. But beyond that the visit carries tremendous political overtones which will have been well noticed not just by the Israelis but also by the entire world.

The King's decision to go in person to condole and comfort the grieving families and the Jewish state, over and above the courage that it truly entails, speaks volumes of the deep wound that the crime has inflicted on the nation as whole.

But his enormous gesture could and should be seized upon to salvage the peace process, which has taken one hit after another in recent weeks, starting with the Israeli government's decision to build a new settlement on Jabal Abu Ghneim, to strictly limit its pullout from the West Bank, to close down Palestinian offices in East Jerusalem, to press on with withdrawing ID cards from the city's Arab residents and ending with the Raqoura tragic incident.

No less here in Jordan than anywhere else should we realise the true meaning and implications of the King's decision to go to Israel at this time. The sceptics, in particular, should begin to calculate the value that will be added to Jordan's humanitarian and political assets in Israel and worldwide by the King's overture. The standing, stature and the enormous respect that he enjoys among the Israeli people have always served as an effective tool for serving and protecting this country's goals and interests simply because he has always represented an indispensable moral force for attaining peace and stability in the region. Those among us who think His Majesty is stepping ahead of public opinion and extending a hand for peace and reconciliation that the Israelis are not willing to extend are entitled to their opinions. Where some of them, namely those who oppose the peace process per se, are wrong however is in understanding and assessing the significance of yesterday's trip.

It is true that no matter how powerful King Hussein's message it will be difficult for it to sink in unless and until the Israeli government is willing and ready to reciprocate his overtures for peace. But that government will not move, it seems, unless forced to do so by a combination of internal political dynamics and public opinion, both of which are considerably influenced and shaped by what happens immediately around Israel and most notably in Washington as well.

This is where the presence and voice of His Majesty has to be felt and heard. Being a key regional leader who has spent the best part of his life and devoted his total energy to working for and defending the need for Arab-Israeli peace, based on justice and mutual rights, his visit to Israel will have been another major step towards achieving that goal, even despite the fact that Benjamin Netanyahu did not go back on his decision to build the new settlement in Jerusalem.

It may be argued that Netanyahu was in no way going to rescind the decision because his coalition government might have as easily fallen as a result. But then the King's visit will have paid off in many other ways, not least in showing everybody in Israel that all reasonable Arabs want true peace.

ARABIC PRESS COMMENTARIES

COMMENTING ON a decision by Lebanon to end its agreement with Jordan on importing Jordanian produce as of October, a writer for Al Ra'i said Sunday this decision means that Jordanian winter crops will not reach Lebanese markets and further bottlenecks will appear in the marketing process caused by the surplus of produce in the Kingdom. Subhi Fahmawi suggested two measures to deal with this situation and the consequences of possible closures of other Arab markets. He said the farmers ought to shift from vegetable production to cereal production, bearing in mind that Jordan is in bad need of wheat and barley which cost a fortune to buy from other countries every year. The writer suggested that the government increase the prices of cereals it buys from local producers as an incentive to encourage them to increase their output. Furthermore, and in view of the surplus of fruits and vegetables which have no market abroad, the government ought to embark on large-scale agro-industrial projects to process and can the surplus produce which fetches higher prices when sold abroad. The writer said processing plants should be established in the rural regions close to the fields that produce crops and so encourage farmers to stay on their lands in the rural areas either working in farming or in agro-industrial projects.

Economic Review

By Dr. Yusuf Mansur

Why aren't you at the movies?

IN THE seventies, Jordan's movie theatres used to pack them in; their biggest problem was that people would not line up to enter. Tough looking guys used to man the entrance to the theatre in order to prevent free riders. The eighties, however, tell a different story. As television and videotape recorders became popular, many of the theatres became less popular. Many of the owners of these theatres also became less popular. And many of the owners of these theatres blamed the TV for the collapse of their businesses. They may be right, but only partially and in a somewhat convoluted manner, because some of the blame rests with them.

Most of the old movie theatres were located, and still are, in downtown Amman. Some of these theatres had their heyday from the fifties through the sixties, when, in addition to being a major source of entertainment, they also doubled as opera houses and live-show theatres since there weren't any. Crowds would rush to see famous singers at the Raghadan or Basman Cinemas. The lower grade theatres, which usually showed old double features, used to have belly dancing during the break between movies — at times that in itself was a bigger draw than the movie. In all these theatres one ate sandwiches of different varieties and drank soft drinks while watching a favourite show. But all this stopped. What happened?

The customers moved away while the theatre stayed put. Audiences moved uptown as building spread to the suburbs of Amman and downtown theatres became distant from the population centres. Unfortunately, and as in the case of the rest of the downtown businesses which could not provide parking for their shoppers, consumers opted to stay away. The inconvenience and cost of having to park far from the theatres caused many would-be patrons to frequent more accessible theatres such as the Rainbow Cinema, which was frequented by upper and middle class viewers — normally people with cars — and catered for their tastes by providing more sophisticated movies than those of other theatres. Even though the Rainbow movie theatre seemed to do very well for a while, especially after it was given a face lift in the eighties, it too went under as a movie theatre and is now the permanent site of the Nabil and Hisham Theatre. But other new theatres that do have parking spaces and are more conveniently located than the downtown theatres have also gone under. Why? The answer points to what is possibly the main cause for the demise of the movie theatre in Jordan: videotape piracy.

The advent of the videotape recorder allowed people the privilege of viewing their favourite movies in the comfort of their own home. Movie theatres worldwide were afraid that the videotape would undermine the role of the movie theatre. In the industrial world, the reverse occurred as the video recorder became a device for advertising new features and creating a greater role for the movies in people's lives. More and better movie theatres came into vogue, offering all kinds of food and soft drinks. The multiplex became the answer to modern viewer's needs; a viewer could select a movie from a set of small theatres located in one complex. Each theatre advertised the movies in the adjacent theatres. Consumer awareness was never better, which allowed the consumer to make better educated choices about their movie options. Educating the consumer helped sales and

improved the quality of the movies themselves. Additionally, smoking inside the theatre was banned, thus reducing fire insurance costs and causing smokers to buy more food items at the concession stand. The theatres were physically smaller but offered more entertainment value than their predecessors. As a result, movie patronage increased.

Another thing which worked for the advantage of movie theatre owners in the West was that they could show new movies which would be released on videotape at a later date. In other words, movie theatres had a later advantage on video: the latter lagged sometimes months behind. In Jordan no such advantage exists. In fact, the reverse is true.

Jordanian movie theatres, which traditionally showed movies months after their release in the West because of cost disadvantages, found a direct competitor in the video store. The store was able to obtain pirated copies of movies sometimes taken off the cinema screen in another country and show it in Jordan months ahead of the theatres. Little by little movie theatres lost another market segment, the viewers who could afford video recorders, to the video stores. Note what happened: first the downtown theatres lost the car owners to the theatres in the suburbs, then all theatres lost the VCR owners, a devastatingly more populous group than the car owning crowd. Downtown theatres kept their prices low, catering for the lower income groups and the quality of their movies went down even further. The theatres in the suburbs increased their fares because of the "dis-economics" of scale and their movies continue to lag timewise behind those of the video store.

Theatres that restrict their offerings to plays have fared better than movie theatres because live shows are live and unless the owner of the play permit its reproduction, the play can only be seen at the theatre. This is why many Jordanian actors have discovered that they can make a good living by going into the theatre. Those actors that do possess talent have found a way to substitute for the lack of intellectual property protection in Jordan.

Although the biggest enemy to all theatres has been the piracy of intellectual property rights, there is one factor that has contributed to the demise of the theatre industry at an accelerated rate: lack of maintenance. Movie theatres that were built in the fifties and sixties were interlarded with architectural marvels, reminiscent — with some imagination — of opera houses and sophisticated theatres. Unfortunately, the owners went for the quick by allowing eating, drinking and smoking inside the theatre, with no regular maintenance. However, had they maintained their theatres, many movie goers may have still visited them out of a sense of nostalgia or in order to see a quality print of the movie, even though months may have lapsed since its release date.

An obvious lesson from all this is that quality cannot be stolen, it has to be bought or produced. Quality has to be maintained and sometimes it is harder to maintain standards than it is to acquire them because maintenance is a continuous, long-term process while setting a standard is a discrete short-term undertaking. Usually, society as a whole is responsible for the demise of an industry, sometimes through lack of vision, sometimes through lack of planning, but oftentimes out of sheer laziness.

LETTERS

Rating services

To the Editor:

WITH THE recent focus being placed by His Majesty King Hussein on public services/governmental institutions, I believe that we need an immediate mechanism to rate our institutional services, like (A) Acceptable, (F) Fair or (N) Not acceptable.

For instance, the Amman Municipality provides good customer service. Municipality staff members are courteous, professional and efficient. So far, no one has attested to their performance in public. But the example of the Amman Municipality proves that through honesty, commitment, good management and loyalty people can traverse the impossible.

It is imperative that an analytical market study be conducted in order to identify institutions that require transformation to reach an acceptable level of services standard. The following cost-effective implementation suggestion might provide an immediate service rating, evaluation feedback.

The local newspapers should volunteer to print the names of all governmental institutions. Next to each institution there should be three boxes containing the letters A, F and N respectively. Readers should be requested to make their choices and send the paper clippings to the nearest post office for collection (no stamps required).

Upon collection of at least 50 per cent of the readers' responses, application of statistical analyses can explain the different inferences placed before conducting such market research. Publishing the results of the study will expose institutions that require reform and rehabilitation.

Samer F. Qubain,
Amman.

Private sector's free hand

To the Editor:

EVEN JORDAN'S most reasonable economists dream of winning the lottery. Ideas presented in some recent columns by prominent economists seem to suggest that Jordanians still believe there is such a thing as "free lunches".

Jordanians (including economists) have relentlessly looked to external factors for their country's economic enrichment. Such "free lunches" include opening the Iraqi market wide open for Jordanian exports; increasing foreign investment (with little effort on our part); receiving cash from Gulf oil-producing countries; getting the Americans to scrap our debt; and other ideas which have nothing to do with hardcore macro-economic development but are "quick fixes" for a long-term economic problem.

What about Jordan's own industries, factories, services, ideas? Any lasting solution will come only from within this country's borders. We can turn to the South East Asian "Tigers" and follow their example: find which industries the country has an absolute advantage in (can produce cheaper than any other country) and focus on them, and while doing so, the government's

only role shall be to keep the momentum up by simply stepping aside. From there, more advanced industries, such as automobiles, electronics and even tourism, can be developed with no government interference.

Although politics has always proved to be a convenient enough excuse to make people accept their economic difficulties, it (politics) is not the real reason behind them. The reason is lack of focus, particularly from the concerned official bodies whose only role should be that of guidance on the economic issues at hand.

Jordan's only path to economic prosperity will come by ensuring that all internal economic, social, political and religious matters are kept at maximum liberty and left in the hands of the private sector. Let this sector face the international competition on its own. They realise that any free lunches will be paid for twice over at dinner.

Ramzi Batarseh,
Amman.

Giving credit where due

To the Editor:

IT WAS with real pride that I read about Taybet Zaman receiving the "Best Project Award as a Human Heritage Tourism for Tomorrow" site from British Airways. This is a global award, meaning that Taybet Zaman was selected as the best tourism project in the world! For a village in Jordan to receive this award is an incredible achievement. The photograph in the Weekend section of the Jordan Times, March 6-7, of Ali Gandour and Leen Fakhour at the presentation represented only two of many significant contributors to this project, one important omission being that of Munir Nassar.

In the early 1980s I was present at a "brain storming session" when "wild schemes" to turn a family/farm complex into a hotel, restaurant, tourism centre were debated. The people participating in this discussion were the owners of International Traders and some members of the Abu Jaber family. The result of those "wild schemes" is what is now known as Kan Zaman. With that completed, attention was turned to Wadi Musa, where months of negotiations and renegotiations to develop Kirbet Al Nawafleh ultimately fell through due to differences between the owners of the village and the developers. Therefore, attention was moved to Taybet, where the village owners were more receptive to its development; thus, Taybet Zaman became a reality.

Throughout this period, there was one single person who stood out as a man of extraordinary vision, and that was Munir Nassar. When most people would have long ago "thrown in the towel," Mr. Nassar persisted and persevered with his dream and it is thanks to him that these unique "Zamans" exist in Jordan.

I do not mean to diminish the role of the Jordan Tourism Investment Company; on the contrary, without JTI, there would be no Taybet Zaman. But credit should be given where it is due.

Karen Asfour,
Amman.

Human Rights File

Capitalising on crime for political gains is inhumane

By Dr. Waleed M. Sadi

THE TAKING of innocent life is always painful, whether it is of Israelis or Arabs, but the sorrow is stronger when the lost ones are children still unaware of the hate that surrounds them or the hostilities that permeate their daily lives.

The seven schoolgirls who were gunned down last Friday were not Israelis or Jews but human beings first and foremost whose lives should have been spared since they cannot be held responsible for all the evil that fills the area in which they and their Arab counterparts live.

When an Arab or an Israeli child is struck down by gunfire, the pain is the same and the injury to humanity is one and the same.

What hurts even more is any attempt to capitalise on such human tragedies and make political gains from them. No side should even think about dehumanising the mass killing of children, no matter against which party it is directed. I believe that children belong not to their nation or country but to all the human race. They are still too innocent to be associated with any political current or political affiliation.

Children should be spared the horrors of war, animosity or hostilities that so often break out between countries driven by xenophobia or national and racial superiority.

There must be an international code of conduct to protect children from the conflicts between states or ethnic or religious warfare. Children should be viewed as neutral beings who must be protected from the rages of wars at all costs. Children are not and should not be fair game who can be hunted down at random. Children constitute a most vulnerable part of the human race, powerless to shape their future and protect their lives from the whims of the adults.

We certainly need to do a lot more to protect them, starting with the protection of their very lives. Children should not be pawns in the hands of adult people. They are and should be the object of all human endeavours; they are the purest and the "richest" of us all because they are the most innocent. How can one then take their lives so cruelly?

Children should not be the subject of abuse or exploitation, be it political or economic. International efforts to prevent child labour and sexual exploitation has also moved in the direction of making illegal the recruitment of children as soldiers.

So any attempt to make political gains from the shedding of the blood of seven school children should be foiled and nipped in the bud.

At this stage we certainly do not know whether the man who pulled the trigger was politically or religiously motivated. We certainly do not know whether the killer suffered from a mental illness or was driven to madness by economic hardships. One thing, though, we know and should know: that any capitalisation on the killing by any side should be a taboo.

Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu was therefore ludicrous when he seized upon the

occasion of the tragedy, and even on the occasion of their funeral, to pronounce that the murder of the children should propel Israel to be more determined than ever to hold on to the whole city of Jerusalem.

I fail to comprehend how and why the killing should have anything to do with Jerusalem, unless the Israeli prime minister presumes that it was motivated by the Arab and Muslim concern for the future of the city.

The time of mourning is not an occasion to politicise it. The killer's action does not reflect on Jordan or its people or its Armed Forces by any stretch of the imagination.

Unlike Baruch Goldstein's massacre of more than 35 Palestinians in Hebron in 1995, which symbolised Israeli extremism, the Jordanian soldier's killing of children does not appear to be linked to any Arab phenomenon or faction, even though Israeli Foreign Minister David Levy hinted during a television interview Friday that the soldier's action may not be an individual act and that some organisation could have been behind it.

What may lend support to Mr. Levy's premise is the timing of the killing. At a time when international public opinion was leaning heavily against Israel over its plans to construct on Jabal, Abu Ghneim and over the extent of its recent redeployment plan, the mass killings took the limelight away from the Israeli decisions and took the sting out of international condemnations.

This is not the first time that international sympathy to the Arab side was swung to the Israeli side by an act of terrorism of one sort or another and this "intervention" might not be as fortuitous as it seems.

What could be even more disturbing is the language of Mr. Netanyahu's letter in answer to His Majesty King Hussein's initial message regarding recent events in which Mr. Netanyahu raised the spectre of de-linking Jordanian-Israeli relations from the Palestinian-Israeli peace talks.

Mr. Netanyahu asked for how long Jordan and Israel should keep their relations hostage to what goes on the Palestinian front. The stage appears set, therefore, for Israel to press harder for a formal separation of Jordanian-Israeli relations from the Palestinian case. When the dust settles, though, I doubt very much that Jordan would accept to fall into that trap for one simple reason: the failure of the Israeli-Palestinian peace talks would have far-reaching implications on the security and stability of Jordan.

It must be borne in mind that the Likud Party's platform still calls for the resolution of the Palestinian question at the expense of Jordan. The Likud Party has yet to amend its charter on this point, despite repeated Jordanian protestations.

Mr. Netanyahu needs to be also reminded of our Constitution which stipulates that Jordan is part of the Arab Nation. Needless to say, the Constitution supersedes all treaties.

52 militants killed in Algeria, reports say

ALGIERS (AFP) — Algerian security forces in recent days have killed at least 52 militants in what appears to be a concerted offensive against extremists ahead of elections in June, newspapers reported Sunday.

At least four armed extremists were shot dead during a weekend raid by police on the capital's casbah quarters and 43 others were killed in Relizane, western Algeria, newspapers reported. They added that five additional extremists were killed in an unspecified location.

The daily Al Watan said the crackdown on Algiers' maze-like, ancient heart of the capital was in retaliation for "an attack against three members of the security services" while La Tribune newspaper, citing a police source, said "yesterday's operation resulted in the death of four terrorists."

A tip-off by residents led the police to the casbah,

where an exchange of fire between the police and the militants carried on through the streets up to the group's hideout, the reports said.

The newspaper Le Soir D'Algerie said a tip-off also led police and army forces to the militants in western Algeria.

A 24-hour battle there resulted in the deaths Saturday of 43 men loyal to the region's extremist chief, Kada Benchiha. Several caches of automatic weapons and home-made bombs were discovered.

No official statement was immediately available on the operations.

As an indication of increased activity by the government, 12 suspected members of the Armed Islamic Group (GIA), the most radical fundamentalist movement at war with the secular authorities, were said to have been killed in a grenade attack by authorities in Algiers last Wednesday.

A series of attempts by the authorities to clear the casbah of extremists have time and time again been frustrated by the quarter's layout: a confusing labyrinth of low houses and terraces running into each other, and narrow, twisting alleys and stairs which often become dead-ends.

Several murders were committed there during the Holy Month of Ramadan, when women refusing to wear the Islamic veil and men who were smoking were targeted by extremists.

The fundamentalist uprising began in 1992 when the government cancelled a second round of elections which the now-banned Islamic Salvation Front (FIS) was poised to win.

More than 50,000 people are reported to have died in the bloodshed since then, according to Western estimates.

Gamaa denies involvement in massacre of Copt Christians

CAIRO (AFP) — Egypt's main armed militant group, Gamaa Islamiyah, has denied any involvement in recent attacks which left 23 people dead, most of them Coptic Christians, the Al Hayat daily said Sunday.

The group, in a statement published by the London-based Arabic daily, blamed the attacks in February and March on "local and foreign" groups which it did not name.

"We will never target Muslims or Copts unless they have been proven guilty," the statement said. "The accusations made against the Gamaa are aimed at undermining its image and inciting the communities against it."

Egypt said Saturday that three of the "most dangerous" Gamaa members were behind two separate attacks on a village and a passenger train in southern Egypt on Thursday that killed 14 civilians, including nine Copts.

"These terrorists have been posted as among the most dangerous of the extremist Gamaa Islamiyah," a senior police official said.

The gunmen stormed Ezbet Daoud village in the district of Naga Hammadi in Qena province killing nine Copts and four Muslims and then opened fire on a train killing a passenger and wounding six.

Police identified the three as Mahmoud Abdul Monem Al Farshuti, Anwar Hamed Abbas and Abdul

Razek Attaya, leader of the Gamaa's southern cell.

Photos of the first two were published Saturday on the front page of the Egyptian government daily Al Ahran.

"The Gamaa, which has denied any responsibility in the Abu Qurqas incident, also denies any responsibility in the Naga Hammadi incident," the statement published by Al Hayat said.

Police have said they believe the Gamaa was also responsible for killing nine Copts in a church in the southern town of Abu Qurqas on Feb. 12.

Security forces backed by reinforcements from nearby provinces searched huge sugar cane plantations, hills and caves in Qena on Sunday while villagers, carrying licensed weapons, set up checkpoints in the area.

"We are more capable, than the security forces, of recognising foreigners," said Salah Mohammad Abdul Shafi, a teacher of Islamic religion, as he stood at a checkpoint outside Bahgura village along with his brother Nasser.

Teachers, a Muslim cleric and state employees were taking turns at the roadblocks leading in and out of Bahgura and neighbouring villages in Naga Hammadi district.

"A number of suspects have been arrested and documents belonging to the Gamaa have been found in mountain caves in the area," a police source said. Security also was stepped

up around train stations and railways.

The three suspects identified on Saturday "have been posted as among the most dangerous of the extremist Gamaa Islamiyah," a senior police official said.

A key lawyer who has been defending militants in Egypt blamed Israel for the attack.

"As long as the Gamaa have denied any responsibility we should believe them. The Gamaa has never considered Copts as a target of its anti-government campaign," Muntasser Al Zayat told AFP.

"I believe that Israel has a hand in this incident," he said.

But he also did not rule out that the killings could have been "an isolated and individual act carried out by militants, which does not reflect the policies of the Gamaa."

Coptic Bishop Kyrillos of Naga Hammadi, Sheikh Ahmad Ibrahim and the head of Bahgura's municipality, Fawzi Al Khuli, said that Bahgura's 45,000 Christian and Muslim population has always lived in harmony and refused to let anything come between them.

"This incident will only serve to reinforce our good neighbourly relations. They wanted to sow religious strife in the village but we will not allow it," said Effat Fawzi Butros, a Copt employed by the local council in Bahgura.

King condoles families of victims of Baqoura attack

(Continued from page 1)

through pictures of Sivan, 13, to show the King some of the family's happier moments.

The wife of President Ezer Weizman, and Education Minister Zvulun Hammer of the far-right National Religious Party were among those taking part in the visits at Moshav Tselafon and Beit Shemesh.

"I am sure Your Majesty will fight this fanaticism," Yisrael Fatih said of the act of the soldier.

"I only have to congratulate you two," the father said, speaking to the Jordanian and Israeli leaders, "and hope you will continue the peace."

King Hussein patted Mr. Netanyahu strongly on the back, nodding his agreement.

"We are determined to ensure that the future of all these children, yours and ours, will be different than what we've been through," the King said.

At the Elkali family who lost daughter Natalie, the

mother, Rivka, asked the King: "How come there was no one who came to treat my daughter in time?"

Rivka was referring to accusations that the Jordanian rescue team took too long to arrive and did not allow their Israeli counterparts to aid. Jordan has rejected the accusation.

"It is something we will find out," answered the King, kneeling before the mother who was covered in blankets. "This act was something no sane person could have committed."

"I want to know it all, all," the mother said.

The King's visits were deeply appreciated by the fathers and mothers of the young victims and they all expressed gratefulness and admiration for King Hussein.

"We feel this is a genuine and sincere gesture," said the father of Shiri Bad-dayev. "We want him to move ahead with peace, and to bring all other countries of the region in the peace process."

"Because we know he can

make peace happen," he said.

"The King's visit showed his commitment and the love for peace. It should not be an issue of land among us (Jews and Arabs), all children of Abraham and believers in the same God," said the cousin of another victim.

"I love King Hussein," said Yehzekel Cohen, whose 13-year-old daughter Nirit was killed in last Thursday's shootings. "I really love him. Despite the sorrow, I say this: I hope and believe in King Hussein and a real peace."

It is King Hussein's fourth visit to Israel since the two countries signed a peace agreement in October 1994, and his first since Mr. Netanyahu took office in June.

It was also the King's second visit to West Jerusalem. His only other visit to Jerusalem was with dozens of other world leaders for the funeral of assassinated Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin in November 1995.



His Majesty King Hussein touches Maya Shmuel, a teenage Israeli schoolgirl who was wounded last week by a Jordanian soldier, as he visits a Jerusalem hospital on Sunday (Reuters photo)

Turkey faces exclusion from new EU forum

APPELDOORN, Netherlands (AFP) — European Union (EU) membership candidates judged not ready to enter the bloc are likely to be offered a place in a new standing conference to soften the blow of rejection, it emerged at a meeting of foreign ministers here.

The ministers were unable, however, to come to a clear stance on whether Turkey would have a place in this new forum, designed, in the words of Dutch Foreign Minister Hans Van Mierlo, to make it clear that countries whose applications are turned down still "belong to Europe," and that they remain eligible for membership at the later date.

"We think the conference is a good and viable idea but I am not in a position to say in what way this will apply to one country or another," Mr. Van Mierlo said.

Britain and France had pushed for a commitment to bringing Turkey in to the new forum but failed to persuade Germany of the case for issuing such a positive signal on the country's prospects for membership.

Chancellor Helmut Kohl was one of six centre-right EU leaders who dropped a heavy hint at a Brussels summit earlier this month that they thought Turkey's Muslim tradition represented an insurmountable obstacle to it being brought into the EU.

The rebuff has caused a downturn in EU-Turkey relations, already frosty because of Ankara's threat to block NATO enlargement unless its EU membership bid is taken seriously.

Mr. Van Mierlo and other ministers attempted to reassure the Turks that cultural or religious differences would not lead to it being treated differently from other candidate countries.

German Foreign Minister Klaus Kinkel refused to comment on whether Turkey should be in the conference but said the door to membership had not been slammed shut.

"It is clear that Turkey does not now fulfill the conditions for membership," Mr. Kinkel said, referring to the country's human rights and minority problems. "But it is still on track to join in the long term."

German sources said Turkey was a different case from Eastern European candidates such as Poland and Hungary, with whom the EU has signed agreements committing both sides to the goal of membership.

Turkey applied to join the EU in 1987 but was rejected two years later. European Commissioner Hans Van Den Broek told the ministers that the EU executive considered the negative opinion it delivered at the time to be still valid.

British Foreign Secretary Malcolm Rifkind said Turkey had to be subject to the "same criteria, same conditions," as other aspirant states. British officials warned that the anti-Turkey stance of some German politicians risked creating a "religious Berlin wall in Europe."

Mr. Rifkind's remarks were echoed by French Foreign Minister Hervé de Charette. He said: "Turkey must be part of the accession process."

Khashoggi to respond to Thai police charges

DUBAI (R) — Saudi Arabian tycoon Adnan Khashoggi said in remarks published on Sunday he was preparing a response to charges of conspiring to defraud the Bangkok Bank of Commerce (BBC) and was hopeful of an amicable settlement.

The Saudi daily Al Eqtisadiyah quoted Mr. Khashoggi as saying from Paris he had started on Saturday "preparing a detailed memorandum including proposals for an amicable settlement to the issue."

Thai police on Friday said they had issued arrest warrants for Mr. Khashoggi and four officials of ailing BBC on charges of conspiring to defraud the bank.

The Bank of Thailand, the central bank, had requested the warrants against the five on charges they jointly conspired to have Mr. Khashoggi receive two billion baht (\$77.5 million) in loans from the bank without credible collateral in 1995.

Mr. Khashoggi "denied categorically" knowing Terry Easter — a Briton arrested on a warrant issued last July on charges of conspiring to embezzle assets of the troubled bank — adding he thought it unlikely he would face a similar fate.

He also denied knowing any of the other people accused in the case.

Israel threatens to send Arafat to exile

(Continued from page 1)

alert, ready to implement a plan to deploy armored vehicles and sharpshooters at key points in the autonomous Palestinian territories.

At Friday's cabinet meeting Israeli security chiefs said the so-called Har Homa project on Jabal Abu

Ghneim could lead to the collapse of the peace process and isolate Israel from the international community.

"We expect a wave of violence and disturbances which could decline into a dangerous escalation," said military intelligence chief Moshe Yaalon.

Ha'aretz's military com-

mentator Zeev Schiff described the settlement decision as fatalist given these warnings.

"The government believes that a confrontation with the Palestinians is unavoidable anyway, independent of the Har Homa project, and it is better that it happens now," he wrote Sunday.

King visits Weizman in hospital

(Continued from page 1)

"This is the conclusion of a few days of great sorrow and of a sense of national shame that we Jordanians have felt...over this horrible crime," added King Hussein, who was accompanied by His Royal Highness Prince Faisal and Her Royal Highness Princess Aisha as well as Royal

Court Chief Awn Khashawneh.

Also present during the King's visit to Mr. Weizman were Israeli Defence Minister Yitzhak Mordechai and Jerusalem's Israeli mayor, Ehud Olmert.

The monarch wished the Israeli president speedy recovery, officials said.

In a separate wing of the hospital, the King visited

the teacher and student wounded in the attack. He expressed his deep regret over the attack. He also wished the two speedy recovery.

After meeting the King, the teacher, Yaffa Shokron, showed Israeli television a gift he had given her: a gold necklace with a good luck charm common to Arabs and Jews.

King voices determination

(Continued from page 1)

criticised by Jordan.

He said the telephone conversation failed to end the stalemate.

His advisor David Bar-Illan told Reuters: "All I can confirm is that there was a three-way telephone call from the prime minister's office with Arafat."

Asked what had emerged from the two hours of talks, he said: "Just a feeling that a line of communication has been reopened."

Asked if there was an effort to get Mr. Netanyahu and Mr. Arafat together, he said: "You can say that." Asked if a meeting might be arranged on Sunday night or Monday, Mr. Bar-Illan said: "I don't have any confirmation on that."

In his remarks at the press conference, King Hussein focussed on the need to counter political violence from any quarter and pursue the peace process.

"We have suffered from violence; we will continue to do our utmost together to fight it," he said.

"We have talked frankly and openly and I can assure you that we will continue to work together for peace in this region," he said.

In opening comments at the press conference, the King said:

"We all in Jordan felt angry, ashamed and shocked by what happened to the little children visiting the island of peace a few days ago. I can assure you that I have expressed my genuine feeling and the feeling of many others when I said that the loss of any individual makes us feel as it is a personal loss for us. We reject violence, the violence from which we have suffered, the violence which we will do our utmost to resist. We will also do all we can to achieve the goal and the dream to which we committed ourselves as long as we live and to give the Israeli, Palestinian and Jordanian children and all the children of Abraham through peace and dignity, the kind of life they deserve and that is worthy of them."

"We will not hesitate at any moment and will continue our full commitment to achieve this noble goal and to live with ourselves...and regarding the coming days, when the children and their grandchildren we did all we could to give them what we were deprived of for a long time."

"I would like to thank the Israeli prime minister and the people of Israel for giving me a chance to be with them today with members of my family and my colleagues and to share with you this moment of sadness and loss."

"We are determined to ensure that everything related to what happened will be discovered in detail...there is no sane person who would undertake such an action and we are determined to make sure that justice will be served."

"We talked about the original plan to tackle before to create a very special thing in that area for the children of our two countries and in all the region to remember those children the victims of yesterday... We were able to talk for a longer period of time and I can assure you that we will continue to work together for peace in this region and to make it a reality among us and to see it growing as we wanted it: a lasting peace between peoples a warm peace, a genuine peace, and to encourage the others and help them achieve the same goal, particularly regarding the Palestinians and the

Israelis."

Replying to questions, the King said:

"Terrorism is something alien to us and to all that we believe in. Concerning to the threat of terrorism, we place ourselves and the overwhelming majority of people in Jordan and in Israel and, I believe, in the whole region, for the defence of our rights and for achieving a secure peace. We are determined to ensure that the minority, wherever it is and whatever it is, will not dictate and impose its will on us to pull us back into darkness, despair and tragedy. I had such a meeting with the prime minister today and he gives me courage and hope regarding the future."

Relations between Jordan and Israel, the King said, will remain as they are.

"We might differ over some issues, and I believe that there are varying stands on these issues. But we are determined to carry out our duty and shoulder responsibilities towards peace... I cannot say that all the issues were solved, but the talks between us were frank and responsible and we hope that they will be translated into serious action in the near future and as fast as possible to achieve the aspired goal."

Mr. Netanyahu said: "We have disagreements and they are not likely to be solved in one afternoon, or one week, and certainly the issue of Jerusalem is one of these."

"But I believe that the principal differences have to be ironed out in direct consultations."

Mr. Netanyahu said he and King Hussein had discussed a number of ideas for moving the peace process forward and some of the initiatives "are being implemented as we speak."

He said one such issue discussed "intensively" with King Hussein was the opening of a Palestinian airport in the Gaza Strip, a project blocked for months by Israeli demands to maintain full control over the facility.

Israel Television said that as a gesture to Mr. Arafat, Mr. Netanyahu agreed to permit the Palestinian leader from using the as yet unfinished airport in the southern Gaza Strip for his personal travels, but not for general air traffic.

Mr. Netanyahu also paid a vibrant homage to the "great courage" demonstrated by King Hussein in visiting the families of those killed and wounded Thursday in the shooting rampage.

"I was deeply moved not only by visiting the families but seeing you and the way you opened your heart and the way your family opened its heart to these people," he said.

"Today was a day that moved peace forward," Mr. Netanyahu said.

"We have no illusions about the difficulties on the road ahead or the obstacles strewn before us. But I have greater confidence tonight that, with vision, and courage and wisdom, the kind you showed today... we can achieve peace that has eluded us."

Mr. Netanyahu also insisted that despite his unwillingness to back down on recent decisions, "no one should doubt the commitment of this government and people to achieve peace between us and the Palestinians, to cement peace between us and Jordan, to give children a future without sorrow and without grief."

Murad, Zamel stress need for joint Jordanian-Saudi ventures

By Ghaila Alul
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — Jordanian and Saudi businessmen seem to agree that in light of the improved economic relations, it is time to start joint ventures in the private sector.

Haider Murad, chairman of the Federation of the Jordanian Chambers of Commerce, Sunday told a meeting of Jordanian and Saudi businessmen, that economic relations between both countries have "tangibly improved" during the past year as trade exchange reached JD200 million.

Mr. Murad called for the establishment of joint ventures between Jordanian and Saudi private sectors.

"There is a high demand for Saudi products in Jordan and any joint project would undoubtedly achieve success and profitability," Mr. Murad said.

Hamad Zamel, president of the Saudi Chambers of Commerce, said that despite the trade protocol between Jordan and Saudi

Arabia, trade exchanges has not yet reached the aspired level.

"There is a need to encourage joint investments and to find ways to remove all barriers impeding trade exchange between both our countries," he added.

The meeting, which was also attended by the Saudi Industry Minister Hashem Abdullah Yamani, followed a Saudi trade fair which was yesterday inaugurated by Prime Minister Abdul Karim Kabariti.

Mr. Kabariti said the fair was bound to bolster economic relations between Jordan and Saudi Arabia as well as pave the way for the creation of a free trade area among Arab countries.

Mr. Murad reiterated the importance of organising more visits and trade fairs in both countries to further enhance the economic cooperation.

Jordan's Industry and Trade Minister Ali Abul Ragheb said the decision by the Arab League to create an Arab free zone area will

facilitate trade exchanges among Arab countries.

However, he asserted that the agreements reached between Arab countries on a bilateral level could prove more lucrative than those reached on a regional level.

"We have successfully attained the minimum level of economic cooperation and we are seeking to achieve a higher level of cooperation," said Mr. Abul Ragheb.

Therefore, Mr. Abul Ragheb said, there is a scope for wider cooperation and economic integration between Jordan and Saudi Arabia especially in light of laws that encourage investments in the Kingdom.

"This will improve the quality of industries in both countries and enable them to reach international markets," he added.

During the first eleven months of last year Jordanian exports to Saudi Arabia reached around JD113 million, while imports from Saudi Arabia reached around JD83 million.

REUTERS REUTERS

The Business of Information

Major Currencies & Cross Rates Prices as at 16/03/97 19:28									
Currency	USD	DEM	GBP	CHF	JPY	CAD	ITL	SEK	FRF
US Dollar	1.0000	1.6845	0.6259	1.4570	123.35	1.3650	1689.83	1.9062	5.7106
DE Mark	0.5939	1.0000	0.4833	0.7278	63.56	0.7564	163.99	2.3369	7.4563
GB Sterling	1.5978	2.7143	1.0000	1.6705	167.35	2.1610	2706.17	3.0457	9.1242
CH Franc	0.6853	1.1522	0.4290	1.0000	133.32	0.9357	135.97	1.7574	5.2007
JP Yen	0.0081	1.5732	0.5069	1.1807	1.0000	1.1062	13.09	154.47	4.8278
CA Dollar	0.7328	1.2429	0.4672	1.0000	111.11	1.0000	128.36	1.7587	5.2007
IT Lira	0.0006	1.0021	0.3889	0.8862	1372.12	0.8072	11.27	13.771	4.0278
NL Guilder	0.5246	0.8806	0.3286	0.7649	64.84	0.7158	104.22	1.5422	4.6278
FR Franc	0.1781	0.2966	0.1096	0.25055	21.58	0.2389	33.37	33.3700	1.0000

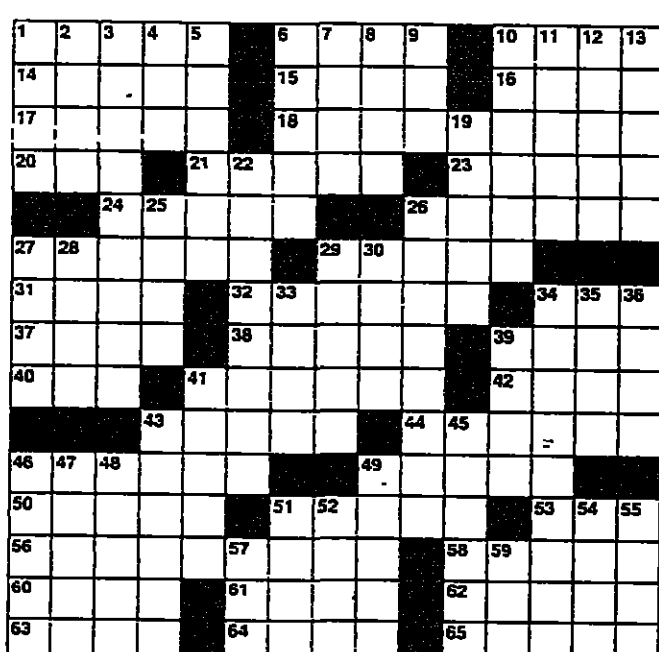
Energy		
Oil	Last	Previous
Brent	19.50	19.20
WT Texas	21.25	20.80
Bouay	19.50	19.20
Dubai	18.25	18.25
UL Gas	201.00	200.00

Mid-East Currencies					
Currency	USD	DEM	GBP	CHF	JPY
SA Riyal	0.2666	0.4520	0.1668	0.38876	32.9534
AE Dirham	0.3723	0.6249	0.2294	0.52497	43.8587
KW Dinar	3.2844	5.5837	2.0618	4.80307	406.504
OM Rial	0.3770	0.6249	0.2294	0.52497	43.8587
CY Pound	1.9875	3.3339	1.2306	2.8866	242.691

Main Equity Indices						
Bourse	Index	Value	Chng	% Chng	High	Low
New York	DOW JONES	6935.48	56.57	0.82	6956.83	6878.29
New York	S&P 500	781.17	3.81	0.49	786.88	778.26
London	FT-SE 100	4424.3	26.5	0.6	4424.3	4397.7
Tokyo	NIKKEI 225	7792.64	25.16	0.33	7792.64	7767.48
Paris	CAC 40	2645.82	13.52	0.51	2645.82	2632.1
Frankfurt	DAX	3389.28	9.66	0.28	3389.28	3379.61

THE Daily Crossword

- ACROSS
1 Not qualified
6 Badger St.
10 Highest point
14 Hitler's realm
15 Laughter
18 "I say, not..."
17 Star of "Lou Grant"
18 Whore Henry V played tennis?
20 Inc.'s kin
21 Prevent, legally
23 Palmer of golf
24 Brave deeds
26 Mountain crests
27 Venetian district
29 Two of Henry VIII's wives
31 Small case
32 State — (disposition)
34 Arcing shot
37 Willing partner
38 Tie score
39 Put to sleep
40 Replayed point
41 Whalebone wear
42 Say for certain
43 Trim
44 Lay — (settle)
46 Refused to participate
49 Hands over
50 Startle
51 A question of ownership
53 Vat
56 Four double faults?
58 Had one's say
60 Ms. James
61 Take on
62 Submarine propeller
63 Film spool
64 Crude metals
65 Ocean depths



by Jay Sullivan

AISHES	JUMP	COST
GROAT	ARAL	OREO
AORTA	DINA	INXS
MINNESOTA	AFATS	
SCIENCE	REM	TOE
PIUN	HUSKS	OMENS
EBIAN	RAE	ONA
CALIFORNIA	AGIRLS	
NIN	YON	LEAK
QAITAR	LANCE	SPY
UNI	TVA	ELAPSE
OKLAHOMA	ACRUDE	
TALL	WAVE	DACHA
ARIA	EZIO	ENTER
SAISS	LESS	DOSES

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- DOWN
1 Eurasian range
2 Kind of egg
3 Carp on the court?
4 Lorelei's rocks
5 Menace
6 "up, Doc?"
7 Desdemona's detractor
8 Send
9 Tin
10 Worships
11 Dracula, e.g.
12 — Antoinette
13 Sen. Kefauver
19 Was concerned
22 Was conspicuous
25 Nobelist Wiesel
26 Bening and
27 Authentic
28 "Let —" (Beal's hit)
29 Divert
30 Pleasant
33 Flowerless plant
34 Segal hit
35 Bauxite and galena
36 Ernie's pal
39 Reveal
41 Morsel
43 Gate
45 Black Sea port
46 More secure
47 Winged
48 Experience
49 Soft drinks
51 Dam
52 Fabled loser
54 Maui music makers
55 Part of CNN
57 Greek letter
59 Toxic industrial chem

JORDAN FINANCIAL MARKET									
HOUSING BANK CENTER AMMAN - SHARAFI									
TELEPHONE: 607171 / 607179									
ORGANIZED MARKET SHARE PRICE LIST FOR SUNDAY 16/03/1997									
PAST 12 MONTHS HIGH	LOW	COMPANY'S NAME	P / E	DIV.	NO. OF TRNS.	NO. OF SHARES	VALUE TRADED JD	OPEN PRICE	CLOSE PRICE
269.000	205.000	ARAB BANK	13.9	1.37	29	2700	687525	256.25	254.75
N 2.100	1.900	JOR. NATIONAL BK.	8	0.00	25	13700	26300	1.95	1.90
* 3.650	2.880	BANK OF JORDAN	10.1	0.00	11	15600	43779	2.88	2.80
1.210	0.880	MID. EAST INV. BK.	66.3	0.00	15	12750	12753	1.01	1.01
2.610	2.120	INDUSTRIAL DEV. BK.	9.2	6.11	2	600	1368	2.29	2.28
5.150	4.250	THE HOUSING BK.	12.4	2.97	3	4100	19065	4.68	4.65
2.950	2.440	JOR. KRAIT BANK	19.8	0.00	2	145	395	2.73	2.73
1.090	0.840	JOR. GULF BANK	5.0	8.33	14	13000	10922	0.85	0.84
4.120	3.480	JOR. ISLAMIC BANK	18.2	0.00	6	650	2617	3.83	3.79
2.800	2.380	UNION BK. SAV. INV.	7	0.00	2	300	446	1.46	1.53
3.000	3.000	JOR. INV. FUND BANK	17.3	0.00	1	100	320	3.20	3.20
BANK SECTOR TOTALS			INDEX: 193.23	CHNG: -0.68	110	63685	805489		
2.770	1.830	JOR. FRENCH INSUR.	5.4	10.53	1	50	95	1.90	1.90
INSURANCE SECTOR TOTALS			INDEX: 119.46	CHNG: 0.00	1	50	95		
1.830	1.450	JOR. ELECTRIC PWR.	11.4	7.12	11	9544	15673	1.63	1.64
2.000	2.090	SHIPPING LINES	10.1	8.33	1	157	360	2.43	2.40
* 1.540	1.080	WATL. PORTFOLIO	9	0.00	41	19700	21525	1.13	1.07
1.050	0.820	REAL ESTATE INV.	22.2	3.73	6	3000	3000	1.01	1.00
0.800	0.410	MACH. EQP. RENT. WATL.	9	0.00	1	1000	460	0.46	0.46
* 3.720	3.130	ARAB INTL. INV. EDUC.	12.0	6.58	1	200	608	3.20	3.04
1.220	0.960	SARKA EDUCATION	9	0.00	9	4270	4228	0.99	0.99
* 2.230	1.680	UNIFIED CO.	7.6	6.67	64	30800	51997	1.68	1.65
SERVICE SECTOR TOTALS			INDEX: 103.45	CHNG: -1.35	134	66465	97850		
3.730	3.060	JOR. CEMENT FACT.	20.2	2.82	18	14629	16405	3.33	3.54
6.100	4.950	ARAB POTASH CO.	18.2	3.33	5	650	3901	6.03	6.00
10.400	8.720	JOR. PETROL. REFINERY	10.3	7.87	8	1466	14902	10.15	10.17
1.590	1.350	MOOLEY INDUSTRIES	60.8	0.00	1	300	685	1.39	1.37
3.410	1.650	INDUSTRIAL CONN. AGR.	33.5	0.00	2	600	1494	2.58	2.49
7.950	6.620	JOR. MORTGAGE BKS.	8.8	3.65	2	450	3091	6.90	6.85
4.140	3.040	ARAB PHARM. WARE.	20.4	5.39	8	4050	15099	3.75	3.71
7.250	5.650	JOR. CERAMIC IND.	8.5	3.67	4	400	2727	6.80	6.81
* 2.310	1.950	JOR. PIPES MANFACT.	8.3	8.00	1	250	375	1.95	1.90
6.650	4.250	DAR ALADMAN DV. INV.	13.1	4.18	4	6550	21744	4.78	4.78
0.960	0.450	LIVESTOCK & POULTRY	9	0.00	28	28500	16390	0.58	0.57
1.020	0.840	NATIONAL INDS.	9.3	9.52	3	1250	788	0.84	0.80
1.840	1.380	INTRNED. PETRO. CHEM.	9	0.00	12	3950	3715	0.98	0.93
* 3.250	2.280	UNIV. CHEM. INDS.	58.2	0.00	1	600	1320	2.32	2.20
3.730	2.130	WATL. CABLE WIRE. WYAC	13.6	0.00	1	650	1227	2.35	2.23
1.670	1.080	ARAB PHARM. CHEM.	27.0	0.00	5	670	1191	1.66	1.44
2.740	1.440	UNIV. MO. H. INDS.	4.9	12.35	5	2950	4804	1.64	1.62
1.820	1.140	JOR. INDS. RESOURCES	16.3	0.00	18	6950	8586	1.31	1.30
1.270	0.840	JOR. NEW ORLEANS CO.	23.9	0.00	4	1650	1455	0.88	0.88
2.400	1.750	EL - KAY READY WEAR	7	0.00	7	8045	14720	1.84	1.83
1.360	1.080	INTL. TOBACCO	27.3	0.00	1	1000	1160	1.17	1.16
INDUSTRIAL SECTOR TOTALS			INDEX: 117.84	CHNG: -0.36	138	73410	135677		
GRAND TOTAL			INDEX: 152.86	CHNG: -0.58	383	205830	1039111		
PARALLEL MARKET SHARE PRICE LIST FOR SUNDAY 16/03/1997									
0.790	0.480	JOR. TRADE FAC.	13.3	0.00	2	350	175	0.49	0.51
0.820	0.680	UNION INV. 501	66.0	0.00	7	12785	2428	0.69	0.69
0.840	0.370	ARAB FIN. INVEST.	9	0.00	25	22950	9173	0.42	0.43
N 0.950	0.950	AL-SHARQ INV. 751	9	0.00	1	200	130	0.95	0.90
N 0.950	0.540	AL-DARALYAH 751	14.7	0.00	1	7000	2800	0.66	0.65
0.640	0.200	JOR. IND. MATCH-JEMCO	9	0.00	8	5750	1323	0.22	0.23
0.740	0.510	ARAB FOOD & MED.	9	0.00	2	900	513	0.58	0.57
1.590	1.300	WATL. CHLORIDE	8	0.00	1	350	348	1.39	1.39
0.690	0.440	ARAB INTL. INV. TRD.	9	0.00	3	10000	4400	0.44	0.44
0.790	0.500	WATL. TEXTILE	9	0.00	1	200	104	0.50	0.52
0.450	0.300	ARAB ALUMIN. DV. INV.	9	0.00	29	81450	35478	0.42	0.42
0.990	0.720	JORDAN STEEL	9	0.00	16	15472	11448	0.74	0.74
1.750	0.600	MID-EAST PHARM. 751	9	0.00	4	20500	7513	0.61	0.62
1.330	0.960	UNION TOBACCO 751	9	0.00	2	1232	874	0.96	0.96
0.770	0.570	WATL. PHARM. 651	9	0.00	1	500	120	0.59	0.59
0.670	0.390	INDS. ENG.	26.5	0.00	11	17700	7974	0.42	0.43
1.120	0.760	INDS. CERAMIC	9	0.00	1	1000	776	0.76	0.76
N 1.020	0.800	ARAB INT. FOOD FACT.	59.7	0.00	1	5000	4250	0.87	0.87
0.950	0.530	MID-EAST COMPLEX	9.4	0.00	63	137000	108126	0.76	0.80
4.250	3.420	ARAB STEEL PIPES	9.8	6.94	1	250	900	3.75	3.60
GRAND TOTAL					180	338990	1797903		

A review of news from the Arabic press

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Ministerial committee evaluates Lebanon's preparations for Pan-Arab Games

Jordanian-Lebanese sports protocol to be signed soon

By Mohammad Ghannam in Beirut and Aileen Bannayan in Amman

THE MINISTERIAL committee formed by the Arab Ministers of Sports and Youth (AMSY) Monday starts its preliminary evaluation of Beirut's preparations for the Pan-Arab Games due to be held in Lebanon July 12-27.

The committee includes Jordan's Minister of Youth Mohammad Daoudieh, Lebanese Minister of Sports Jean Obeid, Abdul Mun' em Amara, the executive officer of the AMSY and Egyptian Minister of Youth, Syrian Sports Minister Samih Mudallal, Secretary General of the Arab Sports Federation Othman Sa'ad, AMSY representative Abdul Hamid Wakil and Zeid Khayami, the secretary general of the Lebanese Ministry of Sports.

Mr. Daoudieh and Arab sports officials congratulated Lebanon on their initiative to host the Pan-Arab Games. "We are not only here to evaluate Lebanon's facilities and preparations for the Games but to contribute our support for Lebanon and its youth in their efforts of reconstruction," he added.

Jordan will be competing in 17 events when the 8th Pan-Arab Games begin in Beirut. A preliminary list of the 257-member delegation was sent to the organising committee including 130 men

and 37 women athletes, 64 officials and coaches, and 26 referees.

An evaluation team from the Jordan Olympic Committee will start meeting participating sports federations starting next week to finalise the delegation.

Jordan's preliminary entry form includes participating in athletics, basketball, karate, fencing, swimming, taekwondo, table tennis, boxing, cycling, equestrian, soccer, weightlifting, judo, freestyle and Greco-Roman wrestling, shooting and volleyball.

Other events at the Games include golf, yachting and tennis making up a total of 20 events. Mr. Daoudieh said the Pan-Arab Games were the first step on the long road to Sydney 2000 Olympics.

On his part, the Lebanese minister of youth said work was underway all over Lebanon to host the Games.

"We are happy to host Arab youth in our country. This is a great opportunity for us to prepare our facilities for the Pan-Arab Games."

The ministerial committee will visit sports facilities in Beirut, Tripoli, Bekaa, and Sidon. They will also visit the sports city, the Golf and Riyadh clubs which will host the main events of the Games.

Meanwhile, Fadi Zureiqat, a member of the

Jordan Olympic Committee's technical committee met with the Secretary-General of the Lebanese Ministry of Youth Zeid Khayami in which he discussed Jordan's participation in the Pan-Arab Games.

It was agreed that the Jordanian delegation would be exempt of visa fees. Referees would also be exempt from accommodation fees.

Zureiqat extended an invitation to Mr. Khayami to visit Jordan and it was agreed in principle that a sports protocol between the two countries would be signed during the visit.

Lebanese officials welcomed Jordan's proposition to hold a mini-tournament in preparation for the Games grouping teams from Palestine, Jordan, Syria and Lebanon.

Sports in the mini-tournament include soccer, basketball, table tennis and tennis.

Jordan finished 9th in the last Pan-Arab Games with 1 gold, 6 silver and 6 bronze medals.

Hosts Syria topped the medals table with 48 points, 31 silver, 37 bronze followed by Egypt and Algeria.

Beirut was scheduled to host the Games last September but the event was postponed after the Israeli bombardment of Southern Lebanon.

The Arab Games were held in Alexandria '53, Beirut '57, Casablanca '61, Cairo '65, Damascus '76, Morocco '85 and Damascus '92.



Obeid S. S. Al Dosary of Saudi Arabia breaks through three Chinese Taipei defenders during their World Cup 1998 Asia qualifying match at Shah Alam Stadium in Malaysia. Saudi Arabia won 2-0 (Reuters photo)

Chang beats Muster, will face Ulihrach in final

INDIAN WELLS (R) — Third seed Michael Chang beat second seed Thomas Muster of Austria 6-1 7-6 (7-1) Saturday to earn the chance to defend his Champions Cup title, against surprise finalist Bohdan Ulihrach.

The unseeded and 43rd-ranked Czech posted a 6-3 6-2 victory over unseeded and 35th-ranked Jonas Bjorkman of Sweden. By virtue of his semifinal success Ulihrach should move into the top 30 in the rankings.

Ulihrach has had a dream week. He ended Pete Sampras's 20-0 match winning streak in the second round here. But instead of being overwhelmed by his second career victory over the top-ranked Sampras, Ulihrach's continued his winning ways.

"You cannot look past his results this week," Chang said of Ulihrach, whom he has never played. "Although Bohdan is not a top 10 guy at this particular time, he's had great results."

Muster and Chang came into the match with identical win-loss records this year of 15-2. Each had won one title in four tournaments played this year.

Each has won one Grand Slam, the French Open.

Prior to Saturday's match, Muster had won five of their six encounters. But the normally tenacious Muster had problems getting around the court, which put him at the mercy of Chang.

"I didn't feel the ball as I did in the past days," Muster said. "That's because of bad footwork. I just didn't move my legs as I used to."

Chang said: "I think a lot of times when you get into the long points or the grinding points, sometimes he was able to kind of wear me down a little bit. Hopefully, each time I go out and play Thomas from here on out, I'll go out there with confidence and remember he's human."

Ulihrach kept Bjorkman pinned to the baseline, preventing the Swede from playing his preferred serve-and-volley game. Bjorkman, who won their only previous encounter, made only three winners on his serve and one with a volley.

"I think he was not playing so well," Ulihrach said of Bjorkman. "Maybe he was a little bit tired because he played last week and got to the semifinal."

Weightlifting federation prepares for Junior Arab Championship

By Roufan Nahhas
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — Only six countries have so far confirmed participation in the 4th Arab Junior Weightlifting Championship scheduled to take place in April at Al Hussein Youth City.

Head of the Technical Committee at the Jordan Weightlifting Federation (JWF) Azam Zu'bi Sunday said that the federation received confirmation from Egypt, Libya, Lebanon, Tunisia, Syria and Palestine.

"We are awaiting other Arab countries especially the Gulf countries," he said adding that the JWF had sent invitations to 18 countries having the end of March as a final deadline to receive confirmation.

Zu'bi said that the Jordanian team is currently going through extensive training under the supervision of Chinese and Jordanian coaches.

"This is the first time Jordan hosts this championship and we are preparing to secure an advanced position in the championship which is vital for our team," Zu'bi added.

"We have promising players who are training hard six days a week. The JWF worked hard to provide all the support they need to make their participation a success," he added.

"Holding the Arab championship is a big event in Jordan and we hope everyone will support it. We need more sponsorship," Zu'bi said that only Al Nabe'h Company had so far sponsored the event. The JWF has received three platforms

from Al Hussein Youth City and warming up equipment from Al Hassan Sports City in Irbid.

Jordan clinched a gold medal in 1996 championship which took place in Lebanon by player Ayed Al Khawaldeh.

The JWF has already named the team that will represent the Kingdom in the championship.

The junior's team consists of Hisham Amareh, Ibrahim Madani, Ali Jabri, Mohammad Fakhri, Daoud Habboub, Mohammad Taim, Mustah Aboudi, Osama Nabil, Khaled Ayoub, Omar Taiseer, Mohammad Jalouqa and Ala'a Mohammad.

The men's team includes Ayed Khawaldeh, Ahmad Abu Jafar, Ahmad Fakhri, Ahmad Aboudi, Raed Taim and Awad Abousi.

Meanwhile the JWF revealed their 1997 plan which includes taking part in many local and regional championships.

"The JWF will be busy this year as we have Al Istiqlal Championship in May, the Kingdom's Open Championship in June, the Kingdom's Professional Championship in July, the Championship on the occasion of the King's accession to the Throne in August, the Ma'an Championship in October and a Championship on the Anniversary of His Majesty the King's birthday," he said.

The championships abroad include the Saddam Championship in May and the Antalya Championship in Turkey.

Captain Bodgit wins Kentucky Derby tuneup

HALLANDALE, Florida (AFP) — Captain Bodgit surged past pre-race favourite Pulpit on the outside to win the Florida Derby here Saturday and make himself a top-rated contender for the Kentucky Derby.

Bodgit, ridden by Alex Solis, won at Gulfstream Park over the 3-5 favourite and will now be among the horses to watch for the May 3 race at Churchill Downs, the first event in the United States triple crown.

Pulpit, who won the Fountain of Youth Stakes last month to impress bettors, settled for second with Frisk Me Now placing third.

Captain Bodgit, third in the Fountain of Youth, won for the sixth time in his career by delivering Pulpit's first loss of the year in his fourth time out.

Pulpit, sired by Belmont Stakes and Breeder's Cup Winner AP Indy, is trying to become the first horse since Apollo in 1982 to win the Kentucky Derby without racing as a two-year-old.

A stress fracture of the right front leg sidelined Pulpit last year, but the injury is now healed.

Manchester United stretch lead with 2-0 win

LONDON (R) — Manchester United stretched their lead at the top of the English Premier League to three points on Saturday with a 2-0 win over in-form Sheffield Wednesday as Liverpool were held 1-1 at lowly Nottingham Forest.

Third-placed Arsenal drew level with Liverpool on points thanks to a 2-0 win at Southampton while Newcastle warmed up for Europe with a 4-0 thrashing of Coventry.

Last-placed Middlesbrough were the only side in the bottom seven to manage a win — 3-1 at Leicester — and Kevin Gallacher claimed a hat-trick as Blackburn beat weary Wimbledon by the same score.

Manchester United went ahead with a first-half Andy Cole goal but had to work hard to contain a Wednesday side that had lost just one of its last 20 league games.

But Czech Karel Poborsky hammered in the second after an hour, finishing off a superb move involving Ryan Giggs, Eric Cantona and Ole Gunnar Solskjaer, and United cruised home with an eye on Wednesday's European Cup quarter-final second leg in Porto.

Robbie Fowler gave Liverpool the ideal start with a goal after just four minutes at the city ground.

Liverpool were in control with fast-moving passing movements stretching the

Forest defence but no further goals were forthcoming. Forest levelled after half-an-hour following another mistake by David James. The Liverpool keeper, who blamed his excessive playing of computer games for his poor performance against Newcastle on Monday, saw his punched clearance sail straight back over his head and into the net via the boot of Ian Woan.

Jason McAteer kept Liverpool in it by heading a Steve Chettle effort off the line in the second half and Forest General Manager Dave Bassett was pleased with the comeback.

Arsenal went ahead with a gift goal as Southampton keeper Mark Taylor dropped the ball at the feet of Steve Hughes who gratefully tapped in his first league goal for the club.

Paul Shaw settled it for the injury-hit Gunners 18 minutes from time.

Newcastle face a tough UEFA Cup quarter-final second leg in Monaco on Tuesday but will travel in confident mood after thumping Coventry.

First-half goals by Steve Watson and Robert Lee set the course and Peter Beardsley with a penalty and Robbie Elliot completed the victory.

Coventry had Brian Borrows sent off in the 71st minute and are, yet again, facing a tough fight to avoid the drop. Clayton Blackmore, outstanding Brazilian Juninho and Dane Mikkel Beck were on target as Middlesbrough stormed into a 3-0 first-half lead at Leicester.

Ian Marshall got a consolation for the home side who will hope things turn out differently when the clubs meet again in the League Cup final on April 6.

Gallacher made it five goals in two games for Blackburn in their 3-1 win over weary Wimbledon, for whom Efan Ekoku was on target.

Everton claimed just their second win in 13 games as Dave Watson's late goal was enough to overcome Derby at Goodison Park.

And in another mid-table battle, Tottenham edged Leeds by the same score courtesy of Darren Anderson's first-half strike.

The day's other game between Aston Villa and visiting West Ham ended goalless.

JORDAN PHOSPHATE MINES CO. LTD.
ANNOUNCES THE INVITATION TO TENDERS
JPMC ANNOUNCES THE INVITATION TO TENDERS NO'S:

S.N.	Tender No.	Subject	Non-Refundable Fee For Each Set	Closing Date 12:00 HRS Local Time
1	12F/97	Supply, erection and supervision of commissioning of: (5) units of Hydraulic Backhoe Excavator.	200JD	Monday 28/4/97
2	13F/97	Supply, erection and supervision of commissioning of: 1) 4 units track mounted DTH blasthole drills. 2) 2 units Electrical blasthole drills (and accessories).	150JD	Wednesday 30/4/97
3	14F/97	Supply of: 1) 3 units water sprinkler (Off-Road). 2) 3 units Diesel Tank (Off-Road).	125JD	Saturday 26/4/97
4	15F/97	Supply of: 1) 4 units of Maintenance truck. 2) 3 units of Filter handling truck.	100JD	Thursday 24/4/97
5	16F/97	Supply of (3) units of Bulk AN/FO Mix & Delivery truck (10 tonne) capacity.	50JD	Wednesday 23/4/97

The Tenders document are available at JPMC offices in Amman. Supply Department; until 2:00 p.m. local time Monday, 7th April, 1997. Application for documents should be accompanied by the A/M non-refundable fee for each set of any tender document. The closing date for submitting bids is 12:00 HRS local time for each tender at the A/M dates.

Samah Madani
Managing Director

EXPRESSION OF INTEREST

The Canadian Government is interested in entering into a residential lease with a Jordanian company or firm wishing to construct a build-to-suit Villa of 520.0 m² in gross area, on a parcel of land averaging 2,000.0 m² to be situated in Abdoun, Al-Diyar or Al-Swaifiyah which will serve as the new Canadian Official Residence in Amman, Jordan.

Interested parties are asked to contact the Canadian Embassy at the Pearl of Shmeisani Building (4th Floor) Shmeisani, Amman between the hours of 10:00 and 15:00 to obtain a free copy of a briefing document explaining the basic requirements expected for the new Villa.

Expressions of interest should be received at the Canadian Embassy by no later than 15:00 on the 27th day of March, 1997.

GOREN BRIDGE

WITH OMAR SHARIF
3 YAMMAM WISCH
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DESPERATE MEASURES

Both vulnerable. South deals.

NORTH
♠ 10 2
♥ Q 8 3 2
♦ A Q 10 4
♣ A 7

EAST
♠ 8 7 6 4
♥ A 9
♦ 8 6 3
♣ A J 9 5

WEST
♠ J 9 5 3
♥ A 9
♦ 2
♣ K 10 8 6 3 2

SOUTH
♠ A Q
♥ J 10 7 6 4
♦ Q J 9 7 5
♣ A 4

The bidding:
SOUTH WEST NORTH EAST
1♣ Pass 2♣ Pass 3♣ Pass 4♣ Pass

Opening lead: Two of ♣

Most players are reluctant to spend a winner needlessly — man is by nature an acquisitive creature who likes to hold on to assets. Once in a while, however, we are forced to go against our nature in order to succeed.

North-South were using old-fashioned forcing raises. With a dead-minimum opening bid, there was no point to South doing anything other than sign off in game.

West led the deuce of diamonds.

Declarer was looking at three fast losers — two trumps and a club. A diamond ruff would defeat the contract. Can you spot a way to avoid it?

South won the opening lead in dummy, cashed the ace of spades and then overtook the queen of spades with the king to lead the ten from the table! When East followed low, declarer discarded the losing club from hand.

This spectacular play severed the defenders' communications — on winning the jack of spades, West had no way to get to partner for a diamond ruff. Declarer ruffed the club switch and led a trump, and no matter what the defenders did, they could not get more than two trump tricks to go with the spade.

Declarer combined two techniques to land the game: a loser-on-loser play combined with a sycophantic coup.

TODAY AT	CINEMA TEL:634144 PHILADELPHIA "1" Eddie Murphy, Jada Pinkett & James Coburn..... in THE NUTTY PROFESSOR Shows: 12:30, 3:30, 6:15, 8:30, 10:30	CINEMA TEL:634144 PHILADELPHIA "2" David Caruso, Kathryn Erbe, Helen Hunt, & Samuel Jacksonin KISS OF DEATH Shows: 12:30, 3:30, 6:15, 8:30, 10:30	CINEMA TEL:699238 PLAZA Adel Imam, Shireen & Saeed Saleh Bakhit Wa Adilah (2) Al Jardal Walkankah Shows: 12:00, 2:00, 6:30, 8:30, 10:30	CINEMA TEL:677420 CONCORD CONCORD "1" MADONNA & ANTONIO BANDERAS...IN EVITA Shows: 12:30, 3:30, 6:00, 8:30, 10:30	Nabil & Hisham's Theatre TEL: 625155 THE THEATRE WILL BE CLOSED FOR MAINTENANCE & REDECORATION WE WILL BE BACK WITH Aman.. Ya Ho
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Jazireh leave for Arab Clubs Championship

By Aileen Bannayan
Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — The Kingdom's third ranked basketball team, Al Jazireh, left Amman Sunday to take part in the Arab Clubs Championship which will take place in Tunis March 17-30.

Al Jazireh will join teams from nine Arab countries in the championship hosted by Al Mal'ab Al Nabli.

Only six teams are taking part in the women's competition. They include hosts Al Hilal, Al Safa' and Al Mal'ab of Tunisia, Egypt's Al Ahli, Hussein Dai of Algeria and Lebanon's Homenetmen.

Fifteen teams will be taking part in the men's competition and have been divided into four groups.

They include in addition to Jordan's Al Jazireh, Al Itihad and Bofariq of Algeria, Al Muroj and Al Nasr of Libya, Al Zamalek and Al Itihad of Egypt, Al Rayyan of Qatar, Kuwait's Al Jahra', Saudi Arabia's Al Itihad, Al Hikmah and Al Riyadi of Lebanon, in addition to Al Najm, Al Zahra' and Al Mal'ab of Tunisia.

This is Al Jazireh's first participation in the Arab Clubs Championship. Former champions Al Ahli and reigning champs Al Orthodoxi previously took part in the competition but declined this year.

Al Ahli are currently preparing for the First Division championship and are awaiting the arrival of their new Armenian coach, a former head coach of the Soviet Union's teams and 1973 European champion women's team.

Al Orthodoxi are currently preparing their team to retain the First Division which starts April 13.

Their under-22 team won the championship title last month and beat Syria's Al Wihdeh in a friendly match last week.

Al Jazireh's, whose members are mostly under-22 team players, failed to continue their two-year reign last month.

However, they beat Syria's Al Jeish and Al Itihad in friendly matches last month and have an improved team who are well known for their unyielding, competitive spirit.

The team has been a strong contender in the Kingdom's First Division Championship for the past two years.

In the last competition they beat Al Ahli and had a sure shot at second if not first place but later faltered in the final round.

Al Jazireh are sponsored by Aramex, whose chairman Fadi Ghandour stressed that the championship is a great opportunity to test the team's readiness for the First Division Championship which Al Jazireh hopes to win for the first time in their history.

The team includes Yousef Abu Bakr, Ma'an Odeh, Hussam Lutfi, Ihab Qaddoumi, Saqr Khirfan and Mu'tasem Salameh.

They will be facing stiff competition from the Arab World's top teams.

The participating Tunisian teams are the top three in their country with hosts Al Mal'ab lying second behind Al Zahra', while Al Najm are third in the Tunisian League.

Riley beats Olympic time at trials

ADELAIDE (AFP) — Former world record holder Samantha Riley clipped half a second off her Olympic 200 metre breaststroke time Sunday and started talking of regaining her world crown.

Riley was fourth in the event in Atlanta last August and, despite the trials here for the August Pan-Pacific Championships in Fukuoka being her first competitive meet since then, clocked her best time since 1995.

"I'm nowhere near 100 per cent fit so if I can do that sort of time now I know I can get back down there," said Riley who touched in 2:27.43.

"I know I have the ability to swim faster than the world record," she said.

"It may not be in me this year. I'm really focusing on the World Championships (in Perth next January), but if it happens at Panpacs I won't complain."

Riley finished in 2:27.91 in the Olympic final won by South African Penny Heyns in 2:25.41.

In preparation for World Cup qualifiers Jordan, Syria draw 0-0

By a Jordan Times Staff Reporter

IRBID — Jordan and Syria played to a goalless draw Sunday in the friendly international which comes amidst both teams' preparations for the upcoming Asian World Cup qualifiers.

The Syrian team arrived here Saturday after playing in Saudi Arabia where they lost 3-0 and drew 1-1 with the Saudi junior team.

The team's head coaches said the match against their Jordanian counterparts was a good chance to test tactics especially since there were still two more months before Syria played their Group 2 qualifiers against Iran, Syria, the Maldives and Kyrgyzstan.

Jordan will be meeting their Syrian counterparts in Damascus next week to conclude the last of their eight friendly matches prior to the qualifiers.

The Jordanian team recently returned from Muscat where they beat Oman 2-0 and 4-1 on the third leg of the team's training camps abroad.

Jordan had played two matches against Lebanon losing 1-0 in Beirut and drawing 0-0 in Amman. Against the Iraqi team Jordan twice lost 1-0 in Baghdad.

The team's head coaches now hope to finalise the lineup with two weeks remaining for the kick-off of the Group 3

qualifiers against Bahrain and the United Arab Emirates on April 8.

The team manager and head coach said they were content with the team's form following their visit to Oman noting that the matches against Syria would be the final chance to test tactics and form since two matches against the Iraqi national team were still unconfirmed.

Thirty-six Asian countries will contest the first round World Cup qualifiers and have been divided into 10 groups.

The 10 groups winners will qualify for the second round where the teams will be divided into two groups.

The first two from each group will then contest the Asian finals.

The first three qualify directly for the 1998 World Cup in France while the winner of a play-off between the fourth team and the Oceania Zone winner will also qualify.

The Kingdom's team includes Ahmad Abu Nasouh, Mu'taz Rishah, Mohammad Abu Daoud, Yousef Ammouri, Mohammad Khaz'ali, Abdallah Abu Zame'h, Amjad Taher, Faissal Ibrahim, Isam Mahmoud, Hussein Shanineh, Adnan Awad, Khaled Yousef, Walid Abdul Rahman, Munir Abu Hantash, Aref Hussein, Nari Yaddaj, Bassam Al Khatib, Ahmad Khalil, Mohammad Muhadin, Jamal Abu Abed, Subhi Suleiman, Ja'far Hamad, Hassounah Sheikh and Jiryes Tador.

Jordan scores 10 points as Bulls beat Hawks

CHICAGO (R) — The Chicago Bulls scored a 99-79 victory over the suddenly slumping Atlanta Hawks Saturday despite getting a season-low 10 points from Michael Jordan and despite another Dennis Rodman incident.

Scottie Pippen scored 11 of his 17 points in the first half as the Bulls raced to a 15-point lead, and Luc Longley had 14 points, nine rebounds and seven assists while holding All-Star centre Dikembe Mutombo to four points on 1-of-6 shooting. Pippen finished with seven rebounds and seven assists.

"I have not seen us perform this badly all season," admitted Mutombo, who was held scoreless in the first half and did not have his first basket until the opening minute of the fourth quarter.

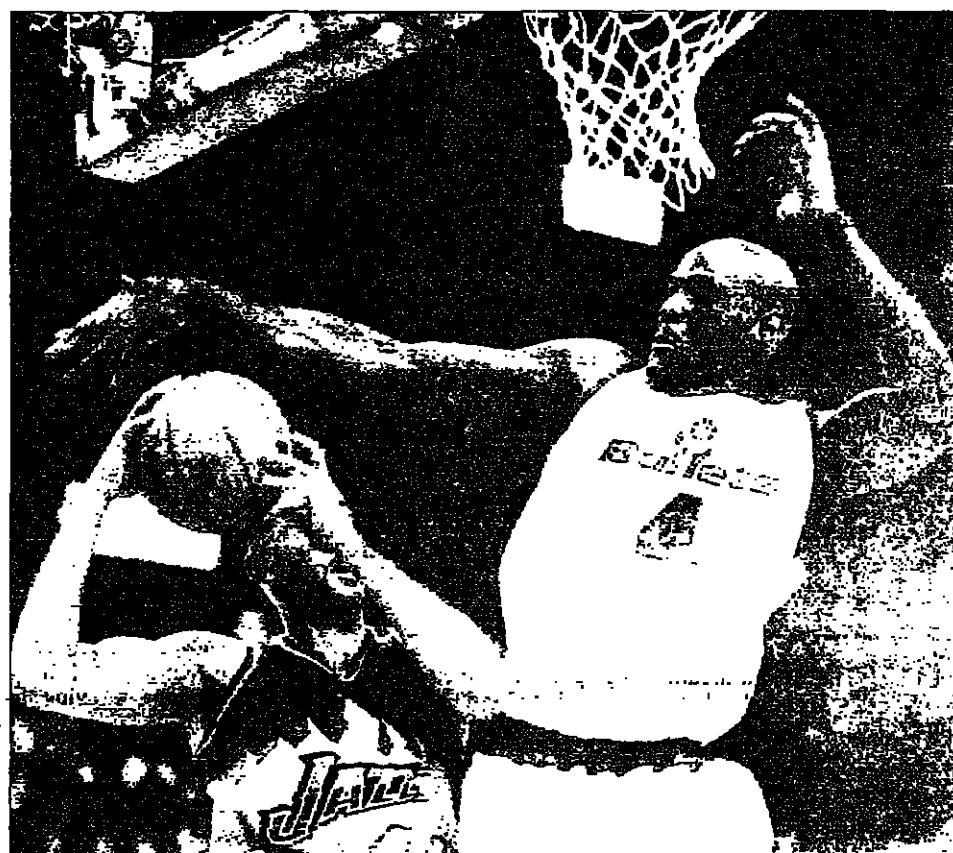
Jordan played just 29 minutes for the Bulls, who avoided losing three times during any five-game stretch over the last two seasons.

Rodman was ejected with 1:02 left in the third quarter after arguing with referee Michael Smith over an incident with Mutombo. "I think Rodman was fighting me to join his class and I would not join and he was upset," Mutombo said. "I don't need him as a teacher."

"The ref said that Dennis cursed him," Bulls coach Phil Jackson said. "There was obviously a double-foul situation. It was not an appropriate call."

At Washington, Karl Malone scored 32 points and grabbed 10 rebounds as the Utah Jazz improved to 4-1 on their seven-game road trip with a 100-93 victory over the Bulls.

Utah has won eight of its



Washington Bullets' Chris Webber (R) prevents a layup attempt by Utah Jazz' Greg Foster in the first quarter of their NBA game at the USAir Arena. Utah defeated Washington 100-93 (Reuters photo)

last nine games as well as eight of its last nine meetings with Washington.

At Golden State, Mark Price totalled 21 points and a season-high 13 assists and Donyell Marshall and Joe Smith each added 20 points as the Warriors nearly blew a 22-point fourth-quarter lead before holding on for a 106-102 victory over the Toronto Raptors.

Marcus Camby, who led the Raptors with 27 points and nine rebounds, converted a three-point play with 10 seconds left to cut the margin to 104-100. Toronto, which trailed 82-60 after three quarters, cut the lead to 104-102 with five seconds to play on a Damon Stoudamire steal

and layup.

Price, who shoots 92 per cent from the free-throw line, hit two foul shots with less than a second remaining to nail down the victory.

In Denver, Laphonso Ellis scored a career-high 39 points and Antonio McDyess added 33 as the Nuggets raced to a 20-point halftime lead and cruised to a 121-105 victory over the San Antonio Spurs.

In Philadelphia, Glen Rice scored 27 points to lead the Charlotte Hornets past the 76ers 107-99.

The Hornets are 7-1 in their last eight games and won for the 12th time in their last 14 contests.

Allen Iverson scored 31 points and had nine assists for Philadelphia, which lost for the fourth time in its last five home games.

In Phoenix, Kevin Johnson scored 23 points and Rex Chapman added 19 as the Suns continued their recent domination of the Dallas Mavericks with a 101-76 rout.

Phoenix beat Dallas for the 17th time in 19 meetings. John Williams grabbed 13 rebounds and former Mav Jason Kidd handed out 10 assists for the Suns, who have won six of their last eight games.

Former Suns Michael Finley and A.C. Green led Dallas with 26 and 13 points, respectively.

Davenport wins 2nd title of the year

INDIAN WELLS, California (R) — In a quick 64 minutes, fourth seed Lindsay Davenport captured her second consecutive title with a convincing 6-2 6-1 victory over sixth seed Irina Spirela of Romania Saturday.

The \$205,000 pay-day for the eighth-ranked Davenport, who will move up one spot in the rankings Monday, was her ninth career tournament triumph. A few weeks ago, Davenport won the Oklahoma city event for her first victory of the year.

A fitter and trimmer Davenport played an aggressive match against the 11th-ranked Spirela, who will be ranked ninth starting Monday. Spirela's game is similar to the big-forehand, slice-backhand style of top-ranked Steffi Graf.

"She plays the same way Steffi does," Davenport said. "I think against Steffi or Irina, you've got to get the second serve to get the backhand. You don't want them teeing off and hitting forehands to start the point off."

The American mounted an impressive attack on Spirela's backhand slice and serve, allowing the Romanian to hold serve only once, in the opening game of the two-set match.

The runner-up showing was worth \$83,000 to Spirela, who earned her

birth in the final by beating top seed Arantxa Sanchez Vicario in the semifinals.

The pressure Davenport put on Spirela forced the Romanian into attempting to do too much, which resulted in 30 unforced errors to Davenport's 13.

"I hit a few important points close to the line," admitted Spirela, who has won four career titles. "I mean, it's always like this when you are starting and she's playing well and you want to try to do too much. You're going to miss."

Spirela, playing in her first hardcourt tournament final, was unable to get Davenport to deviate from her planned tactics. In seven break point attempts, Spirela was successful twice — in the fourth game of the first set and the second game of the second set.

"She really hits the ball very hard," Spirela said. "I was surprised. The ball was very, very deep and very hard. You have no time to go back and no time to come into the ball."

Although the final was an anticlimactic ending to the tournament, Davenport, who lives only a couple of hours away from this desert resort, was helped by having taken part in the most exciting match of the week.

Davenport came from behind to beat young Venus Williams 6-4 5-7 7-6 (7-1) in the quarter-finals.

NCAA RESULTS

NEW YORK (R) — Second-round results in the 1997 NCAA men's college basketball tournament Saturday (prefix number denotes regional seeding):

East Region (at Winston-Salem)			
1-North Carolina	73	9-Colorado	56
5-California	75	4-Villanova	68
Southeast Region (At Memphis)			
1-Kansas	75	8-Purdue	61
4-Arizona	73	12-Charleston	69
Midwest Region (At Auburn Hills)			
6-Iowa St.	67	3-Cincinnati	66
2-Ucla	96	7-Xavier Ohio	83
West Region (At Salt Lake City)			
4-Joseph's Pa.	81	5-Boston C.	77
1-Kentucky	75	8-Iowa	69



Formula One World Champion Damon Hill sits in his new Arrows car as technicians work on it prior to a testing on the Le Castellet race track near Marseille. Hill and the Arrows team are preparing for the next Grand Prix on March 30 in Interlagos, Brazil (Reuters photo)

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KING VISITS BEREAVED FAMILIES AND WEIZMAN: His Majesty King Hussein talks with the father of Sivan Fathi, one of seven Israeli schoolgirls killed in Thursday's attack, during a visit he paid to Israel on Sunday to condole the families of the seven (Right): The



King also paid a hospital visit to Israeli President Ezer Weizman, who broke a leg and an arm in an accident on Friday (Reuters photos)

Israelis, Palestinians in Oslo-like talks on their future borders

OCCUPIED JERUSALEM (AP) — Israeli and Palestinian politicians and academics have been holding secret meetings in Jerusalem since September to brainstorm about future borders. Israel Radio reported Saturday.

The discussions, in which the participants have floated proposals on a land swap, have the official sponsorship of neither the Israeli government nor the Palestinian National Authority.

But they are reminiscent of earlier covert dialogues that led to breakthroughs in the peace process, starting with the meetings in Norway that led to the 1993 agreement granting autonomy to the Palestinians.

The basis of the latest discussions, according to the radio report, is a "land-for-land" swap: Israel would get "sovereignty" over parts of the West Bank it considers vital to its security in exchange for chunks of territory now considered part of Israel.

Israeli delegation leader Alexander Lubotsky, a conservative member of parliament, said Israel would establish sovereignty over "strategic settlements" near Jerusalem such as Maale Adumim and Gush Etzion. He did not specify the territory the Palestinians would get in exchange.

"These are areas which the Palestinians know will in the end come under Israeli sovereignty," Mr. Lubotsky, who lives in Gush Etzion, told the radio.

The radio said Mr. Lubotsky refused to identify the Palestinian participants, other than to say they were briefing Palestinian President Yasser Arafat on the discussions.

Mr. Lubotsky, a member of the Third Way Party that belongs to Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's right-wing coalition, claimed Mr. Netanyahu had also "shown interest" in being kept abreast of the progress of the discussions.

Netanyahu spokesman David Bar-Ilan, however, denied any knowledge of the talks.

The chances of the secret dialogue contributing to the official peace talks is far from certain. The notion of relinquishing territory within the 1948 border is virtually taboo among Israelis.

However, it may be presented as a small price to pay if it guarantees full Israeli control over Jerusalem, a demand so far flatly rejected by the Palestinians.

"In general, we welcome the existence of these meetings and discussions," Likud coalition chairman Michael Eitan told the radio. "It's much better than shooting at each other."

Still, Mr. Eitan expressed skepticism whether the ideas discussed in the meetings would "will be accepted anyone else."

When such meetings occurred during the Labour-led government of assassinated Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin, Likud representatives attacked them, claiming they weakened Israel's overall negotiating position.

The report said the meetings were arranged by Yossi Alpher, a strategic analyst with the American Jewish Congress who brought Israelis and Palestinians together for meetings.

Mr. Alpher claimed there was "a growing consensus" in Israel in favour of "a territorial solution" with the Palestinians, the radio said.

He said the sides have been meeting since last September's bloody violence triggered by Israel's opening of a new entrance to an archaeological tunnel in Arab East Jerusalem. The violence led to accelerated negotiations on an Israeli pullout from the West Bank city of Hebron.

Israel should compromise and Arafat should not lose hope, says Mubarak

CAIRO (Agencies) — Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak urged Israel on Sunday to compromise to salvage the peace process and prevent a flareup of violence and told Palestinian President Yasser Arafat "not to lose hope."

Mr. Mubarak also stressed in an interview with Egyptian state television that the only way to peace was through negotiations.

"The only alternative for Israel, the Palestinians or the Arab Nation is peace and must negotiate," Mr. Mubarak told the talk show Good Morning Egypt in an interview taped Saturday in Morocco, where he was on an official visit.

"Negotiations are the only means to solving this complicated issue because military operations never solved anything in the world," he said.

Addressing Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, Mr. Mubarak said: "Peace deserves any kind of compromise because peace means life for the people and avoids bloodshed while violence increases hatred and violence."

Former Israeli prime min-

isters Yitzhak Rabin and Shimon Peres "understood that because maybe they had more experience" than Mr. Netanyahu, Mr. Mubarak said.

He also addressed a message to Mr. Arafat saying: "May God help you overcome these problems but persist in the negotiations and do not lose hope. We will undoubtedly find a solution."

Mr. Mubarak called for a "lasting and just peace" which guarantees a solution to the Palestinian problem and the return of Syrian territory occupied by Israel.

"Syria will not sign peace unless it is reassured of recovering all its territory," including the strategic Golan Heights, Mr. Mubarak said.

He ruled out Syria's return to peace talks with Israel — frozen since February 1996 — "unless it knows beforehand, not necessarily through a clear public statement but by some other means, that it will recover its land."

Mr. Mubarak returned to Egypt on Saturday from visits to Morocco and the United States.

In Rabat, Mr. Mubarak

announced that an Organisation of the Islamic Conference (OIC) committee dealing with Jerusalem would meet there on March 27 and 28.

The committee meeting would be held at ministerial level and would follow an extraordinary OIC summit being held in Islamabad on March 23 and 24 to discuss recent Israeli moves in Jerusalem and other issues.

Syria pessimistic

Syria meanwhile has expressed pessimism over the Middle East peace process and said a lack of Arab coordination encourages Israel to avoid facing up to international resolutions.

Syrian Vice-President Abdul Halim Khaddam, in an interview published Sunday in the London-based newspaper Al Ashraq Al Awsat, also called for peace talks with Israel to resume at the point where they left off with the previous government.

"Undoubtedly, the lack of Arab coordination in the peace process helped the Israelis evade the interna-

tional obligations imposed on them," Mr. Khaddam said.

"If we look at Netanyahu's policy and the intentions behind his policy, it is hard to be optimistic," he added at the end of a visit to Brussels with Foreign Minister Farouk Al Sharaa.

"As for the settlements issue, it is a basic part of Netanyahu's policy," said Mr. Khaddam, referring to a decision to build a new Jewish settlement in Arab East Jerusalem.

Mr. Khaddam reiterated Syria's demand for peace talks with Israel to resume at the point where they were broken off with the previous Labour government, which Damascus insists included an agreement to hand back the Golan Heights.

Mr. Netanyahu has repeatedly urged Syria to come back to the negotiating table "without pre-conditions" since he took office in May last year, but he has also previously ruled out giving up the Golan.

Peace talks between Israel and Syria have been on ice since February last year after the first in a wave of militant suicide bombings in Israel.

Anglican Church assails Israeli settlement plan

OCCUPIED JERUSALEM

(AP) — Anglican Church leaders issued a statement Sunday assailing Israel of violating peace agreements with the Palestinians by planning to build a Jewish settlement in Arab East Jerusalem.

The archbishop of Canterbury, George L. Carey, the leader of the Church of England, raised the issue with Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu.

"The settlement is a big problem, and we hope something may be done about that and other settlements as well," the Most Rev. Carey said in an interview with the Associated Press.

He described the level of tensions between the Israelis and Palestinians as "serious" and said the answer was dialogue.

"It is terribly important to get people negotiating, talking. You know, jaw-jaw rather than war-war," he said.

Speaking in St. George's Cathedral after overseeing Sunday services, Archbishop Carey praised Mr. Netanyahu and King Hussein for getting together after the killing of seven Israeli schoolgirls by a Jordanian soldier last week. He said politicians had to build on the sympathy that was stirred by the tragedy.

But he also suggested rising Palestinian-Israeli tensions over the settlement and other issues may be

behind the shooting.

"We need to know why did it happen, what provoked it. It's a terrible massacre, and we hope it won't be repeated," he said in the interview.

Arch. Carey oversaw a week-long conference of 39 bishops and archbishops from around the world.

The biennial meeting ended with an expression of sympathy for the young Israeli killed last week and strong backing for the Palestinian effort to halt the planned settlement.

"We have expressed our concern over the Israeli government's plan to construct a new development at Har Homa between East Jerusalem and Bethlehem and see this as a violation of the Oslo accords and a threat to the peace process," the statement said.

Mr. Netanyahu, in a meeting with Arch. Carey and the presiding bishop of the United States, the Most Rev. Edmond Browning of New York City, disputed the reference to the Har Homa project as a settlement, an aide said.

"The prime minister said it is no more a settlement than building in Arab neighbourhoods is settlement. It's a housing project," said Netanyahu adviser David Bar-Ilan, who attended the meeting.

Sheikh Saad improving in London clinic

KUWAIT CITY (AFP) —

Kuwait's Crown Prince and Prime Minister Sheikh Saad Al Abdullah Al Sabah is making steady improvements in the London clinic where he is recovering from surgery, the deputy premier said Sunday.

"He continues to be fed intravenously but he is also beginning to eat with his mouth and this is a good sign that Sheikh Saad's health is continuing to improve," Deputy Premier and Defence Minister Sheikh Salim Sabah Al Salim Al Sabah said from London.

Sheikh Salim also said Sheikh Saad was beginning to move in his bed, the official Kuwait News Agency (KUNA) reported.

Sheikh Saad was first admitted to hospital in Kuwait on March 5 and then had surgery on his colon before he was flown to London aboard a medical aircraft supplied by Saudi Arabia's King Fahd.

Sheikh Salim, who is a first cousin of the crown prince, is currently in London visiting Sheikh Saad.

The 66-year-old crown prince is a distant cousin of Emir Sheikh Jaber Al Ahmad Al Sabah, who appointed him premier in 1978 under a power-sharing arrangement between Sheikh Saad's Al Sabah branch of the ruling family and the emir's Al Jaber branch.

Sudan warns it will retaliate for 'Ugandan' attacks in the south

KHARTOUM (AP) — The state minister for foreign affairs, Mustafa Osman Ismail, warned Sunday that Sudan will respond decisively to attacks in the south that it blames on Ugandan forces.

The statement came a day after talks between Uganda and Sudan broke down in the Ugandan capital Kampala after each side refused to admit it supported rebels in the other country.

President Omar Hassan Al Bashir said meanwhile Sudanese government forces have recaptured the strategic town of Chali situated near the Ethiopian border.

"Our forces have scored a new victory by liberating Chali on the border with Ethiopia," Lieutenant-General Bashir told a huge rally attended by the armed forces chief of staff.

"The battle has begun and will stop only when all of our territories are liberated," he continued.

Gen. Bashir did not specify when the town, which fell to rebels at the same time as Kurmuk, Qessan and other villages in Blue Nile state, had been recaptured.

Forces of the National Democratic Alliance, which groups northern opposition with southern rebels, launched a major offensive in eastern Sudan to oust Khartoum's regime in January.

Sunday's rally was attended by tens of thousands of students, workmen, young people and displaced people from the south of the country, who carried banners and shouted slogans condemn-

ing "the Ugandan invasion" of towns and villages in southern Sudan.

Uganda, Eritrea and Ethiopia have denied charges made by Khartoum of involvement in the fighting in southern Sudan, which they say is being waged solely by the Christian and animist rebels who have been fighting Khartoum for 13 years.

For the past two days, state-owned radio and television has been broadcasting announcements calling upon the people to take part in the rally.

On Saturday, Sudan's high command announced it had retaken the border town of Bonj, south of Chali, from rebel forces.

Mr. Ismail, the foreign minister, warned Ugandan President Yoweri Museveni against making war against Sudan, the official Sudan News Agency reported.

He said the offensive against the border towns of Kaya and Bazi showed that "Uganda was pressing ahead with its aggressive policies against Sudan."

He added: "If the battlefield became the sole means, Sudan would prove to be the most capable of decisively winning."

Mr. Ismail also said that while Sudan was seeking dialogue with its neighbours, "foreign pressures" were preventing them from succeeding. He did not elaborate.

Uganda broke diplomatic relations with Khartoum over the question of support for the rebels in 1995.

Japanese diplomat's mission sparks hope for end to Lima crisis

LIMA (AFP) — A top Japanese diplomat's visit to Peru, Cuba and the Dominican Republic this week could herald a breakthrough in the protracted hostage crisis here entering its fourth month Monday, observers said.

Japanese Vice Foreign Minister Masahiko Komura said in Tokyo Sunday that he would ask the leaders of Cuba and the Dominican Republic to accept Peruvian rebels in a bid to resolve the standoff.

President Alberto Fujimori last month secured offers of asylum for the rebels from both countries on a whirlwind Caribbean tour.

But both said they would need formal requests from both Peru and Japan before accepting any of the Tupac Amaru Revolutionary Movement (MRTA) rebels who have been holding 72 prominent Peruvians, Japanese and one Bolivian in the Japanese ambassador's residence.

"I know that no countries in the world are really willing to accept terrorists, so I will have to make the request very sincerely," Mr. Komura told Jiji Press.

The Tupac Amaru guerrillas have publicly ruled out accepting asylum, refusing to back down on their demand that 440 of their jailed comrades be released into Peru's jungle, where the approximately 15-strong commando inside the residence could join them.

Mr. Komura, who will make the trip as a special envoy of Japan's Prime Minister Ryutaro Hashimoto, is scheduled to meet Mr. Fujimori on Tuesday and said he would seek extra efforts from the Peruvian government for the release of the hostages.

"I would like to ask him to make further efforts so that all the hostages can be released safely," Mr. Komura said.

Negotiations have been stalled for more than a week since the heavily armed rebels charged that Peruvian authorities were tunnelling below the Japanese ambassador's residence to launch a raid.

First the MRTA then the government called off two separate negotiating sessions.

The guarantors' commission, which is monitoring the on-again, off-again talks, has met separately with the government's point man on the crisis, Education Minister Domingo Palermo, and with the rebel leaders inside the residence to try to jumpstart the talks.

Meanwhile, the government stepped up security around the residence, setting up barricades near the mansion and pushing reporters back further from the entrance to the compound.

On Sunday a police helicopter circled low over the residence for more than 10 minutes before retreating slowly from the area. Mr. Komura said he would express to Mr. Fujimori Japan's concern about "a possibility of unpredictable developments" in the standoff, the Jiji press said.

After his visit in Lima, Mr. Komura goes to Cuba on Wednesday for talks with President Fidel Castro and meets Dominican Republic President Leonel Fernandez on Thursday.

COLUMN

Wife aims at husband's penis, slices off finger

MACAU (R) — An angry woman lopped off her husband's finger while trying to sever his penis after she accused him of having a mistress in China, police in the Portuguese-run enclave of Macau said. Neighbours said they called police after hearing the couple having a noisy argument about the husband allegedly having a "second wife" in China, where he frequently went for business. "Second wife" is a euphemism for mistress in the enclave, which borders China's southern province of Guangdong. Although the 33-year-old man repeatedly denied his wife's allegations, she tried to cut off his penis with a kitchen knife but sliced off his finger when he tried to protect himself, neighbours and police said. Hospital sources said the man's finger was re-attached and that he was in stable condition. The woman was due to appear in court on Monday, police said.

Japan pet-lovers

can rent by the hour

TOKYO (R) — A Tokyo pet shop owner is offering animal lovers in crowded Japan a rental-pet service as an alternative to buying a four-legged companion. With more than 12.5 million people jammed into the capital, apartment managers often have strict rules prohibiting ownership of dogs or cats. So, hundreds of would-be pet owners are making tracks to Masahiro Kobayashi and his "Perro Moco" rent-a-pet shop. Kobayashi said he came up with the idea about eight years ago as a service to Japanese production houses making films or television commercials. Since the animals being used in films were not getting enough attention when off camera, Kobayashi decided to give ordinary people a chance to rent them as well. He says many pet renters have "favourites" among the 15 dogs and 15 cats, some for sale, that are kept at the shop. Of his 30 to 50 customers per month, most are young couples on dates or potential pet owners who want a trial run, he said. A four-hour walk with a cat or a small dog costs about 3,000 yen (\$24.60). Larger dogs cost 5,000 yen (\$41). Professional renters such as film studios pay 10 times as much.

Russian court jails man who traded human flesh

MOSCOW (R) — A Russian court sentenced a murderer who traded pieces of his victim's flesh as ordinary meat to eight years in prison. ITAR-TASS news agency said. The man, Anatoly Dolbyshev, from the town of Berezni in the Urals region of Perm, was found guilty of stabbing to death a friend of his mother's in a fight. Dolbyshev, who had several previous convictions, then cut up his victim's body and sold pieces of the human flesh to unsuspecting local townsfolk in exchange for vodka. Police were called when one buyer found a strip of human skin in the meat, the agency said. The court found Dolbyshev guilty of murder, "swindling and appropriation of property through deceit," TASS said, adding that the Russian criminal code did not contain a more appropriate article.